LIFESTYLE / C1

Power of prints
Young artist's works mesmerize

INQ7.NET

Read running account
of President's Sona today at sona.inq7.net

NEWS/ A2

Classes suspended
in all levels due to typhoon, Sona

SPORTS / A39

RP team returns
to Senior League World Series in style

Sona protesters ready for rain, water cannons

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE GOVERNMENT may not need 16,000 police personnel to clear the streets, after all.

Typhoon "Glenda"

SONA/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, July 24, 2006 ★★ 9 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 226 P18 website: www.inq7.net

GMA approval rating up to 26%, survey shows

WHEN PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO delivers her sixth State of the Nation Address today, she is politically stronger than she was a year ago.

Last year, Ms Arroyo was reeling from the "Hello Garci" tapes that purportedly showed she stole the 2004 presidential election, and the resignation of key Cabinet officials who had

GMA/ A8

GMA in triumphal mood

President delivers Sona today, confident she's over the hump

By Christine O. Avendano and Juliet Labog-Javellana

WITH HER WORST POLITICAL CRISIS BEHIND HER, President Macapagal-Arroyo will outline in her sixth State of the Nation Address today the achievements of her administration and a roadmap to lift Filipinos from poverty and bring the nation to prosperity.

The nationally televised speech at the opening of the third regular session of the 13th Congress will reflect the President's "triumphal mood," Rep. Joey Salceda said over the weekend. She will assume the role of a "CEO reporting to a board of directors."

The President will focus on "bread and butter issues"—the things that she "cares about most," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye. "It will be about what the people want: A clear economic direction for the nation and a plan detailing how we are going to get there."

"Her vision is to bring the Philippines to First World status, something like Malaysia," said one Palace source, who reported that Ms Arroyo herself was working on her address on her laptop computer.

The President's chief of staff, Michael Defensor, and jobs czar Arthur Yap were standing by her as she prepared her address. It was not expected to be finalized until shortly before delivery, the source said.

"She's confident that she is over the

GMA/ A19

BACK FROM BEIRUT. Lolita Allas (right) hugs her mother Marivic Enage upon her arrival at Villamor Air Base yesterday, together with over 200 overseas Filipino workers. JESS YUSON

232 Pinoys back home, bare ordeal

By Nikko Dizon, Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk
and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

MORE THAN 200 OF THEM FINALLY came home yesterday, bearing tales of how their buildings shook under the Israeli bombing of Lebanon and of how other Filipinos could not leave because their employers refused to let them go and took them up to the mountains.

One returning young woman, in her 20s, was in a daze when she got off the plane at Villamor Air Base in Pasay City. She was taken immediately to a hospital. The talk among the other returnees on the plane was that she had been raped in Beirut.

As the first batch of 232 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) from war-battered Lebanon flew back to the Philippines, a Filipino domestic worker sent a text message to the INQUIRER from the Lebanese city of Jounieh: "Please, get us out of here!"

The worker, Florelie Rubia-Lara, was among those left behind.

Reached through a mobile phone that she said she had borrowed, Lara told the INQUIRER that she and about 20 other Filipinos had been trapped in a building in Jounieh outside Beirut for the past two weeks and could not get out.

President Macapagal-Arroyo and their relatives welcomed back the 232 Filipinos, including two children and two infants, who represented the initial

232 PINOYS/ A5

THE STATE OF THE NATION

Economy: Rising prices, few jobs, shallow growth

By Cielito F. Habito
INQUIRER columnist

(Last of a three-part series)

AS PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO delivers her annual State of the Nation Address (Sona) today, the state of the economy, as usual, looms large in the overall picture.

While economists seem the logical people to ask about this—as I have been repeatedly asked by those in media since last week—ultimately, the best judge would be the ordinary Filipino. After all, people make up a nation; the state of the nation therefore boils down to the state of the people.

Fernando del Mundo
Chief

To best assess the state of the nation in general and of the economy in particular, one must look at the picture from the viewpoint of the ordinary citizen. And here, I constantly point out that among the array of economic data reported to us by the government, the ordinary Filipino really cares about only three indicators that directly affect his daily life—*presyo* (prices), *hanapbuhay* (jobs) and *kita* (income).

ECONOMY/ A18

Public mood to indicate nation's state

By Amando Doronila

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO DElivers her State of the Nation Address (Sona) today amid a false sense of political calm, providing a stark contrast to the turbulent events that have swirled around the contentious 2004 election.

ANALYSIS

As the President enters the midpoint of her elected term, she is, for the first time since 2004, not facing the imminent threat of being unseated, unlike in July a year ago.

Although the legitimacy issue over the 2004 election results continues to rock her administration, it is undeniable that the country is not today in an acute crisis mode as it had been during the past three years.

On July 10 a year ago, three weeks be-

PUBLIC/ A18

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo warmly receives the returning Filipino workers, including Christina Aldaya and her 2-month-old son Gabriel Arthur. EDWIN BACASMAS

Center offers RP 'cultural caregiving'

By Jerry E. Esplanada

SEOUL—SHE IS A LIVING EXAMPLE OF what diplomats call "Pinoy culture at its best," the kind of overseas Filipino worker likely to boost the Philippines's image as a land of caring people.

Visiting Presidential Adviser on Culture and the Arts Cecile Guidote-Alvarez and Philippine Ambassador Susan O. Castrence were referring to Emire Habade, a 37-year-old Filipino-Korean housewife who has become a source of inspiration for the large Filipino community in South Korea.

Habade was recently cited by the Korean government for her "devotion to her 94-year-old Korean mother-in-law," who has been suffering from total paralysis and hypertension since 2000.

No less than President Roh Moo-hyun came to see Habade at her family's home in Chongwon-gun in north Chungchong province to greet her, according to the Korea Times.

During the visit, Roh "encouraged (Habade) to have courage to overcome any hardship" she may encounter.

Habade, who has been looking after her mother-in-law for the past seven years, came to South Korea 10 years ago to marry Kang Pong-sik, a laborer.

Alvarez and Castrence spoke about Habade to the INQUIRER during the recent opening of the Philippine-Korean Cultural House (PKCH) here.

At the opening of the cultural house,

CENTER/ A7

Tales of cheating cast doubt on nursing exams

By Christian V. Esguerra

ONE EXAMINEE GOT ALL THE "ANswers" to the test questions just hours after the conclusion of the controversial nursing licensure exams on June 12.

Lined up at an Italian fast-food restaurant in a Quezon City mall, he was shown a handwritten copy of the supposed "answers" to all the 500 questions.

Introducing himself as another examinee, the stranger, still wearing his white nursing uniform, confessed to getting the "leak" three days earlier from his school in Sampaloc, Manila.

"Which correct answers would you like to find out?" the stranger asked the dumbfounded examinee, leafing through his copy.

Another examinee was told that in Batangas, a CD supposedly containing similar leakage was being sold for P7,000 each.

Of the the 42,006 nursing graduates who took the board exams, 17,821, or 42 percent, passed, according to the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).

Shortly after the official results were released last week, a woman who took the exams stormed the PRC office.

She couldn't believe how her seatmate, who didn't show up on the second day of the exams, passed. The seatmate missed at least two of the five tests given during the two-day exam, she protested.

In a prominent nursing college in Manila, at least seven passers curiously got identical 75-percent ratings in each of the five tests. Statistically probable, but highly unlikely, their peers said.

But they also wondered: Could it be that scores had been manipulated on top of the reported leakage?

Stories of cheating—big and

TALES/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, JULY 24, 2006

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Second FRONTPAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon will have rains and gusty winds and the its coastal waters along these areas will be moderate to rough. Western sections of Luzon and Visayas will experience occasional monsoon rains which may trigger flashfloods or landslides. The rest of the country cloudy rainshowers or thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY KATE V. PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/07/23/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Rains	Roxas	Rains
Tuguegarao	Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

All classes suspended due to storm, Sona

By Christine O. Avendaño

MALACAÑANG LAST NIGHT announced the suspension of classes in all levels in Metro Manila and in several Luzon provinces in the face of monsoon rains enhanced by typhoon "Glenda."

Earlier, the Department of Education announced classes were suspended today in the public schools located around the Batasang Pambansa complex in Quezon City on the occasion of President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said work in government offices will also be suspended today, except those offices "performing health protective services."

These would include government hospitals, among others.

The DepEd also announced the suspension of classes in the same areas covered by the Malacañang statement.

The suspension was made upon the recommendation of the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), Bunye said.

"Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita has authorized the suspension of classes (today) at all levels in Pangasinan, Zambales, Bataan, the National Capital Region, Rizal, Bulacan and Cavite," Bunye said in the statement.

Officials of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said the monsoon rains had been intensified by Glenda.

The typhoon was estimated yesterday afternoon at 490 km east-southeast of Basco, Batanes, with maximum sustained winds of 150 kph. It was moving west northwest at 15 kph. *With a report from Alcuin Papa*

Cops, activists pledge peaceful Sona rallies

By Luige A. del Puerto

WITH A FORCE ROUGHLY equal to a third of the full complement of the Philippine National Police in Metro Manila, cops and soldiers in full riot gear will face-off with thousands of demonstrators opposed to President Macapagal-Arroyo in and around the metropolis today.

But both the organizers of the rallies and police officials are optimistic that violent clashes could be avoided as the President delivers her State of the Nation Address at the Batasang Pambansa complex in Quezon City.

Both sides also agreed that the weather—a typhoon is threatening the country—would have a major impact on the demonstrations. *(See story on Page A1)*

"After the dialogue with (Director Vidal) Querol, we're hoping for the best but still preparing for the worst," said Carl Ala, spokesperson of the left-leaning Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas.

Encouraged, the police decided on Sunday to further decrease the number of men to be deployed at Batasan complex to about 5,000.

An additional 3,000 will be deployed elsewhere throughout Metro Manila, according to Querol, chief of the 15,000-strong National Capital Region Police Office.

"I have directed the augmentation forces from the provinces, about 1,000 men, to no longer proceed to Metro Manila," Querol told the INQUIRER.

Police guard up

"Our talks with the militants are clear about the protests. They will follow (what's stated in their) permits," he said.

But even with the dialogue and the expected heavy rains, the police will not be letting their guard down.

Concrete barriers, barbed wire and container vans will line portions of Commonwealth Avenue, the main artery to the Congress building.

The message is that any attempt to break the police line to reach the Batasan would be "futile," Querol said.

Some 20,000 activists will take to the streets primarily to demand the resignation of Ms Arroyo, according to Renato Reyes Jr., secretary general of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan.

This time around, however, they will intersperse their call for her ouster with "humor." Bayan earlier described it as a day of "heckling."

Reyes said many unresolved issues continued to hound the President two years after the 2004 national elections.

They include allegations of poll cheating, corruption, a tendency toward dictatorial rule, and her seeming tolerance of the extrajudicial killings of militants.

"These are the questions that she cannot answer. These are the unresolved issues," Reyes said.

Protest convoy blocked

Police in Laguna province yesterday briefly stopped some 250 activists who were on their way to join protest actions in Metro Manila, militants said.

"They were stopped in Biñan. The more than 250 farmers and laborers were from Quezon province," Ala said.

He said they were eventually allowed to proceed, only to be stopped again by Air Force personnel at the Nichols' exit of the South Luzon Expressway.

PNP Director General Oscar Calderon said he had not ordered that activists be stopped from entering Metro Manila.

"My orders were to look for loose firearms and arrest criminal elements," Calderon said. "In the process of conducting checkpoints, it's possible there would be a little discomfort, but we ask for understanding. What we are doing is for everyone's safety."

In Dagupan City, Speaker Jose de Venecia said the Batasan complex was safe from any incidents that may disrupt President Arroyo's Sona.

De Venecia, who met with reporters Saturday night, said he had overseen security preparations at the Batasan to ensure the safety of Ms Arroyo, the lawmakers and their guests.

"I had to coordinate the security arrangements both inside and outside the Batasan. I had to coordinate with the police, the military and the intelligence community," he said. *With Nestor Burgos Jr., Carla Gomez, Jhunnex Napallacan and Jolene Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau; Delfin T. Mallari Jr. and Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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"So What If I'm 43?"

Though she will infinitely be remembered for her portrayal as the brow-arching villainess who delivered that infamous line opposite the Megastar in true *contravida* fashion, Cherie Gil's longevity is, more than anything, a product of being a woman of substance. Now 43 years old and proud of it, she is at the prime of her life.

"One of the biggest misconceptions about me is that I'm a bitch," she exclaims. "Don't get me wrong, I can be. But I believe I'm just an honest person. That's one unshakeable truth about me. What you see is what you get. In fact I've never tried to hide my age. Personally, I enjoy the process of aging. I have embraced that reality and I've accepted the facts."

While some women, when asked their age, declare, "I've stopped counting at 25!" Cherie, on the other hand, embraces it. "When I got to 40, I didn't see much of a change but more of a lightness of being. I don't stress so much anymore. I know exactly what I want and I know exactly what I cannot control. I think the reason why I look young is because I feel young. I think young. And I like to be young. As much as possible, when I don't have to put on make-up I'd rather not wear make-up. My work though, requires me to put on a lot of it. So I make sure that the make-up sets are clean and that their brushes are made of sable. I prefer using high-end products. I'm very particular about what I put on my face. I also use skincare products from Facial Care Centre and I make it a point to get regular treatments there."

One may find the image of this beautiful 43-year old in a nun's habit nothing short of ironic. Cherie's recent portrayal in the play *Doubt* not only required her to don a nun's uniform, but to play a character very far from herself. "I was playing the role of a mean 50-year old nun. Imagine doing that every day for one month. I was worried the lines on my face were going to stay there! True enough, they did become more defined."

It was during the last run of *Doubt* when she decided to drop by her favorite sanctuary for a few treatments. "Right before rehearsals, I decided to drop by Facial Care for a Collagen Facial and Advanced Lasertone. When I saw myself in the mirror after, I just saw the difference! I felt so relaxed and I had this glow on my face. I've decided that Facial Care Centre is going to be my second home! The moment I walked in here, I knew they were very reliable. I know I'm in good hands with this establishment. They've been around for more than 23 years, before anyone else."

She reveals how her skincare regimen has changed after discovering Facial Care: "Before, I would get a facial done every 2 weeks, sometimes once a month. Now I'm doing it more routinely. At my age, I know I have to do it more often. So I'm at the Centre at least once a week. If possible, I go there twice. I like the Collagen Infusion Mask a lot. The moment they put the collagen mask I feel quite refreshed, and there's that supple softness I feel to it. I also like the Skin Tone Re-energizer or what they call STR because it's a non-aggressive, non-invasive procedure. You see, I'm a coward when it comes to plastic surgery. With the STR, it becomes a process of diminishing the wrinkles and lifting the skin gradually. As you do it routinely, you can really see the effects."

She also raves about Facial Care's exclusive Repechage Almond Honey scrub, which reminds her of her teenage years: "When I was around 16, I liked to pamper my skin with home-made concoctions. This scrub reminds me of those days. I really like how it smells."

Though she fondly remembers her younger years, amidst what she recalls were "padded football-shoulders and hair like a cobra," Cherie imparts that she has never felt as beautiful as she does now. "I guess it's true. 40 is the prime of any woman's life. It's at this age when she knows how to carry herself and is sure of herself. So here goes a statement to all women heading for 40: Look forward to it! I think it's the best time of my life. I'm a better mother, a better wife, a better friend. I'm a better person to myself. I think I've had enough years to correct a lot of my lessons, and I think I've become a good student so far."

A convincing testament of age being just a number, Cherie is the anti-thesis of the outdated perception that women should deny their age to be perceived as beautiful. After all, why hide your age when you can embrace it? And why deny it, when you can flaunt it?

> **"When I saw myself in the mirror after, I just saw the difference! I felt so relaxed and I had this glow on my face. I've decided that Facial Care is going to be my second home!"**

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Cherie Gil, 43

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Fill empty Batasan seats, GMA backers told

By Michael Lim Ubac

FEARING THE PROSPECT OF President Macapagal-Arroyo addressing an empty hall when she delivers her State of the Nation Address today, congressional leaders are mobilizing their allies to fill up the seats at the Batasang Pambansa plenary hall and rally behind her.

"Our attendance will be a show of support to the President's call for help to push her agenda," said House Deputy Speaker for Mindanao Gerry Salapuddin.

Some senators and minority members of the House had declared they would boycott the President's Sona.

"It's truly disappointing that every year, some opposition members do not attend the Sona yet they are quick to criticize the President after her speech. They have become part of the problem. This only shows their self-centeredness," said Salapuddin.

Rep. Mauricio Domogan of Baguio City, vice chair of the House committee on constitutional amendments, said the opposition's boycott and other planned disruptions like rallies and street protests would have no impact on the holding of the Sona.

The so-called Batasan 6, who are facing rebellion charges in connection with the alleged leftist-rightist conspiracy last Feb. 24, have decided against attending the Sona.

"When Ms Arroyo delivers her Sona on Monday afternoon, we the Batasan 6 will not be there. We will boycott her speech in protest of her regime's campaign of political persecution against her critics and all-out war against the people," said the leftist lawmakers in a joint statement.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday twitted the administration for deploying thousands of policemen and soldiers to secure the President.

"The heightened security to be provided by 16,000 cops or soldiers betrays her state of siege mentality," Pimentel said in a phone interview. "I wonder why a supposed leader of the country appears to be scared of her own people so much so that she requires so much firepower from gun-wielders of the state to protect her."

In a statement, Pimentel said the show of force by the police and military during the Sona was proof of the President's "increasing isolation" from the people and the extent of her efforts to keep her grip on power.

Pimentel and other opposition senators, including Panfilo Lacson, Jinggoy Estrada and Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, would boycott the Sona anew in view of lingering doubts on her legitimacy.

The opposition senators disclosed they would rather deliver a "counter-Sona" speech on the floor within the next few days.

But some of their colleagues, Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, Pro Tempore Juan Flavier and Senators Richard Gordon and Manuel "Mar" Roxas II confirmed they would be attending the Sona, saying it was their duty.

Outgoing Senate President Franklin Drilon, who had dropped hints in a TV interview Saturday he might not attend, and his successor, Sen. Manuel Villar, could not be reached for comment.

Citing surveys, Pimentel said ordinary Filipinos were economically worse off, the country remained an economic laggard, corruption and criminality were becoming more pervasive, and the human rights situation was deteriorating.

Japan joins ceasefire monitors in Mindanao

JAPAN YESTERDAY joined the team monitoring the ceasefire between government troops and the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the first country that is not a member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to be part of the International Monitoring Team (IMT).

The entry of Japan, which boosted prospects of an early peace in the South sooner, came after visiting Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Azo met with President Macapagal-Arroyo to convey, among other things, Tokyo's desire to "engage more actively in the peace process" in Mindanao, according to Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

Quoting Azo, Bunye said Japan took the initiative to play a role in the Mindanao peace process after both the Philippine government and the MILF sought Tokyo's involvement.

Bunye, however, made it clear that Japan would not send any military troops like IMT members Brunei, Malaysia and Libya to monitor the peace process between the government and the MILF, which he described being in its "final stages."

"Japan has decided to participate in the IMT by sending an official who will play a leading role in the economic and social development area," Bunye told reporters following the meeting between Ms Arroyo and Azo at the Palace.

Bunye said the Japanese official would be backed by a team composed of officials of the Japanese Embassy in Manila, Japanese International Aid and other Japanese agencies.

A Department of Foreign Affairs official, however, told the INQUIRER that Tokyo had already sent a "development specialist" here and that the latter was now at IMT headquarters in Davao City "looking into the needs and requirements for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Mindanao in a post-conflict scenario." ***Christine O. Avendaño***

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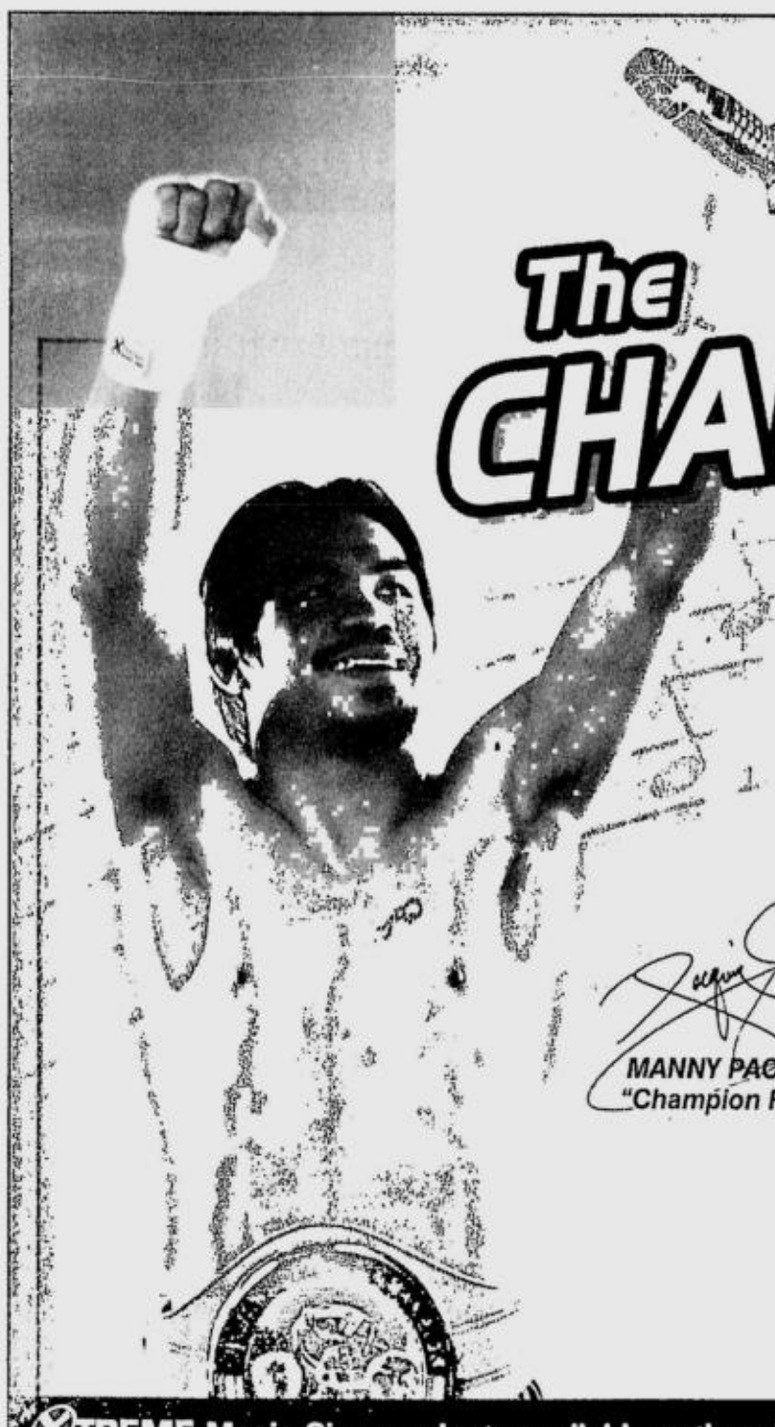

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Monday, July 24, 2006
16th Week in Ordinary Time
Sharbel Maklouf

1st Reading: Mic 6:1-4, 6-8
Gospel: Matthew 12:38-42

Some teachers of the Law and some Pharisees spoke up, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you." Jesus answered them, "An evil and unfaithful people want a sign, but no sign will be given them except the sign of the prophet Jonah. In the same way that Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of the monster fish, so will the Son of Man spend three days and three nights in the depths of the earth.

"At the judgment, the people of Niniveh will rise with this generation and condemn it, because they reformed their lives at the preaching of Jonah, and here there is greater than Jonah. At the judgment, the Queen of the South will stand up and condemn you. She came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and here there is greater than Solomon."

Commentary

God cries out his plea against us even to the mountains. He has brought us out of bondage and set us free, accompanying us always and giving us prophets and leaders: Moses, Aaron and Miriam. And yet all God wants from us is three-fold faithfulness: We are to "do justice, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God." Jesus is being plagued by the leaders for a sign even though he obeys Micah's command publicly so that all can see and hear. He does justice for the afflicted, loves/pities crowds and walks humbly before God. And Jesus calls them to judgment—even the people of Nineveh repented at Jonah's words and he is greater by far than Jonah, than Solomon, and no sign will be given except the sign of Jonah in the whale. The sign of the cross and resurrection—that is our sign.

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232 Pinoys back home, bare ordeal

From page A1

batch of OFW evacuees from the bomb-shattered Middle East country.

Ninety-five percent of the estimated 34,000 OFWs in Lebanon have been accounted for, said her chief of staff Michael Defensor.

Defensor said the remaining 5 percent were likely those who were brought along by their employers who fled Lebanon and those unable to contact the Philippine Embassy.

2 more batches coming

Ms Arroyo said the government hoped to bring home two more batches of OFWs today and tomorrow.

Most of those who arrived yesterday on the chartered Jordan Aviation Airbus 310 were in tears. They were simply thankful to be home.

Many expressed concern for the safety of their fellow OFWs stranded in Lebanon.

"There are still many Filipinos whom their employers wouldn't let go," said Matilde Amatorio, 39. "There are many in the mountains, taken there by their *amo* (masters)."

Amatorio said she believed many more Filipino workers were trapped in Saud district.

Bombs rattle buildings

Cristina Badillo, 40, said other OFWs employed as househelp remained at the Mansourieh Residences.

Another worker, Nora Doria, who has worked in Lebanon for a decade, recounted how terrifying it was to hear bombs explode and rattle buildings.

"Houses and buildings were shaking. The explosions were so loud they would wake you up," Dora said in Filipino. She said most of the Israeli air strikes occurred at night.

Her daughter was constantly crying, she added.

Some said they had to flee their employers, who did not want them to leave.

Plea for help

Febe Pingol, who has worked in Beirut for 15 years and who arrived with her 10-year-old son, said some OFWs called the embassy for help.

Pingol recalled that an officer of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, Mario Antonio, rushed to the aid of the trapped OFWs and argued with their employers until they let the Filipinos go with him to the relocation center.

Pingol said that many of those who returned practically had no money.

As far as she knew, she said, 36 of them were previously held at the Lebanese immigration detention center but were turned over to the embassy when the war broke out.

At least 90 ran away from their employers before Israel carried out its air strikes against the Hezbollah militants, she added.

Pingol said she lived some 5 km away from the Beirut Airport and constantly heard loud explosions.

17-hour flight

Efren Limon, 39, said he did not want to leave because he might not be able to return to his work in the home of former Lebanese Defense Minister Mohsen Dalloul.

But his employer assured him that he and his family could return as soon as the war ended. Limon arrived with his wife Cristina and 2-month-old son.

The 17-hour flight made two stopovers in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

One OFW was seen smiling and waving a small Philippine flag from the plane's window.

"I assure the nation that we are doing everything in our power to ensure the safety of those who need to remain in Lebanon. Those who wish to leave are being transported in an orderly way," Ms Arroyo said in welcoming the OFWs.

A labor official told the INQUIRER that the Philippine government was "still trying to get bigger planes" for the Filipino workers still in Beirut.

Trapped worker

Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said that of the first batch of OFWs evacuated from Beirut, 65 could not make the flight home and were left at the Living Saint Elias Monastery in Damascus, Syria.

Defensor told reporters that, according to special envoy Roy Cimatu, there were no more Filipinos left in the southern part of Lebanon, the area covered by Malacanang's order for the evacuation of OFWs.

Lara, the household help trapped in the city of Jounieh, 18 km north of Beirut, said she and her 20 other stranded compatriots had been together only since last Wednesday after an Egyptian man played Good Samaritan by gathering them from several buildings and a nearby mountain.

"We're worried. We don't know the exact date when we are going to be able to get out of here," the 32-year-old native of Botolan, Zambales, told the INQUIRER.

Without money or papers

Lara said their employers had abandoned them without giving them money or returning their passports and employment documents, heightening their uncertainty.

She said her own employer, whom she said was the mayor of Jounieh, had fled to Canada.

At first, she said, she was locked up in an apartment on the fifth floor of the Golden Rose building in Jounieh.

When she appealed to her employer to bring her and the other Filipinos to the Philippine Embassy, "he told us we were safe and we were not going to die. I was told I could only go home after three years (her contract's duration)."

Lara said she was also advised not to tell her relatives about what was really happening in Lebanon.

Wounded by bombing

The aerial bombardment on June 15 shattered the glass windows of their apartment, wounding her, she said.

"My wounds are painful. I couldn't sleep. Small noises are enough to make me get out of bed and scamper for safety," she said in a text message she sent last week to relatives in Botolan, Zambales.

"If help would not come, we might die here," Lara said. She also expressed concern for her three children in Botolan.

Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) president Archbishop Angel Lagdameo called on Filipinos to pray for the safety of the OFWs in Lebanon.

Too little, too late

"We encourage our people to pray in order that their (Israel's and Lebanon's) differences may be resolved peacefully and that peace may reign in the country," said Lagdameo.

"We pray for our overseas workers there waiting to be repatriated and I hope that it will be done speedily."

For the nongovernment group Migrante International, it was a case of too little, too late.

"During the first day of fighting, other countries like France and the United States began evacuating their citizens out of Lebanon. When the fighting got worse, that's when [the government] acted. The warning came too late," Migrante chair Connie Bragas-Regalado said in a phone interview.

Regalado also said that if the government lacked financial resources to transport the OFWs to a safer place, it could tap the P1-billion budget it planned to use for the all-out war against rebels to address the more pressing problem of saving the Filipino workers.

Under the Migrant Workers Act, a P100-million emergency repatriation fund is also placed under the management of the Owwa.

With reports from Leila B. Salaverria; and Hazel Villa, Chito Fuentes and Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau

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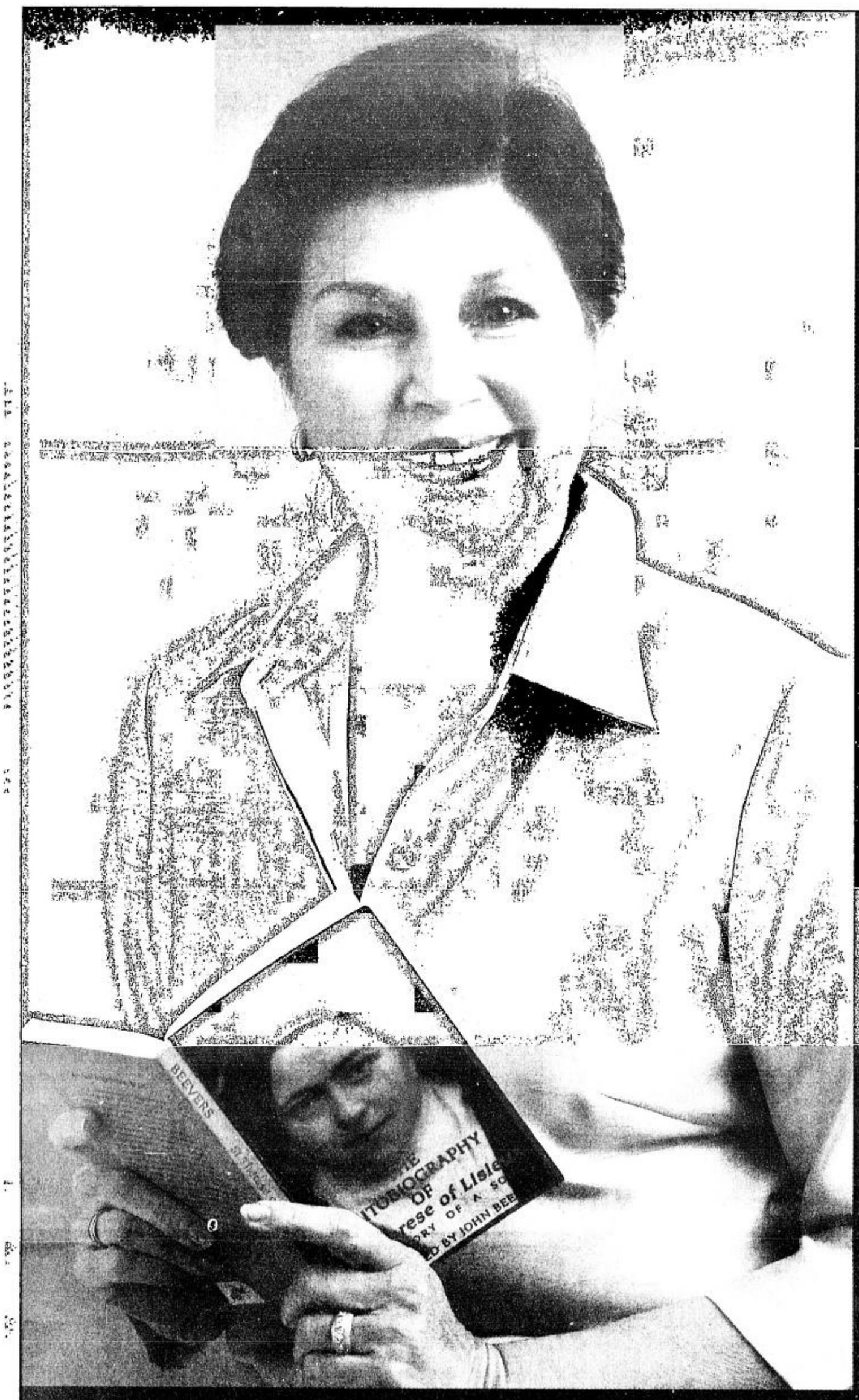

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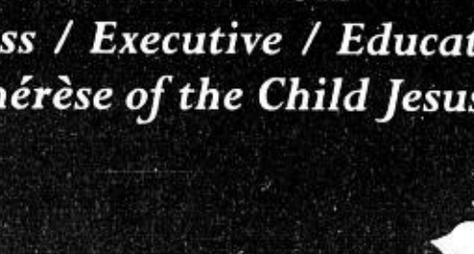
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Center offers Pinoy 'cultural caregiving'

From page A1

Alvarez, also the executive director of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA), launched what she called a "Pinoy cultural revolution."

Home to 50,000 Pinoys

"You may also call this cultural caregiving," she said. "It means using culture as an instrument in addressing the spiritual, intellectual and basic social needs of overseas Filipino communities."

South Korea is home to more than 50,000 Filipinos, many of whom are factory workers.

A group of South Korean businessmen and educators has vowed to support the Filipino cultural effort and proof of this is the establishment of the PKCH, said center president Son Jong-sun.

Aside from cultural fairs and exhibits featuring Pinoy art, the Filipino community here can look forward to music concerts and performances by Manila-based talents, Son said.

The center will also help promote Philippine tourism and business.

Use of Internet

It also plans to publish an English "guide book" on daily living in South Korea, develop scholarship programs, and provide counseling to Filipinos facing cultural and labor-related problems, said PKCH Executive Director David Song.

Add to that the free use of the Internet at the center by Seoul-based Filipinos.

Castrence said the center would help bring Filipinos and Koreans closer to each other.

"This is what's beautiful about culture and the arts," Alvarez said. "They are what can cement our societies together. Where politics is so fragmenting, through culture and the arts, you can link or bond people together."

Alvarez said this "cultural caregiving" to overseas Filipino communities started during the martial law years.

"We lived for 13 years in exile in the US East Coast. In New York, it's easy to do such an activity because there were so many Filipino artists based there," she said.

THE Philippine-Korean Cultural House (PKCH) in Seoul is formally opened by Cecile Guidote-Alvarez, presidential adviser on culture and the arts, Philippine Ambassador Susan Castrence, PKCH director James Kim and immigration lawyer Estanislao Canta. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"The workshops we did reconnected Pinoys, especially the young ones, to Philippine history, heritage and language. I had parents calling me up, asking *'Anong ginawa mo sa anak ko, Filipina na* (What did you do to my child? She has become a Filipina).' They saw their American-speaking kids singing and taking part in Pinoy plays."

"When we returned [to Manila] we used this for the marginalized groups, like those in Smokey Mountain, the Payatas and other slum areas. You'll be amazed how you can transform them, develop their self-confidence and build their capacity to confront reality," Alvarez said.

Cultural advance

Alvarez believes the time has come to spread the same cultural experience to migrant Filipino workers.

"The heart of cultural caregiving is compassion," she said. "Even if you are not the one hurt, you are also affected if someone else is in an unhappy situation. So you have to do something. You have to care and share."

This means "a return to eternal values of caring, sharing and daring to do what is right amidst obstructionism, internecine rivalries, prejudices and intolerance."

Alvarez said the NCCA planned to upgrade the Filipinos' basic skills in dance, music and related fields, energizing them and giving them new skills.

According to Alvarez, the government is pushing a similar "Proud to be Pinoy" cultural diplomacy in Mexico, Spain and other parts of Europe, the Middle East and other regions with large Filipino communities.

Of the PKCH, Alvarez said: "At last, there is a home where Filipinos can have language courses, a place for social gatherings and a library where both Pinoys and Koreans can have access to Filipino books and other publications."

Manila and Seoul established diplomatic ties in 1949.

Pinoys fought in Korea

Castrence said the two nations became very close when the Philippines sent some 7,000 soldiers to fight in Korea in 1950-53 to help ward off communist incursions. Less than 3,000 out of those 7,000 Filipino soldiers are alive today.

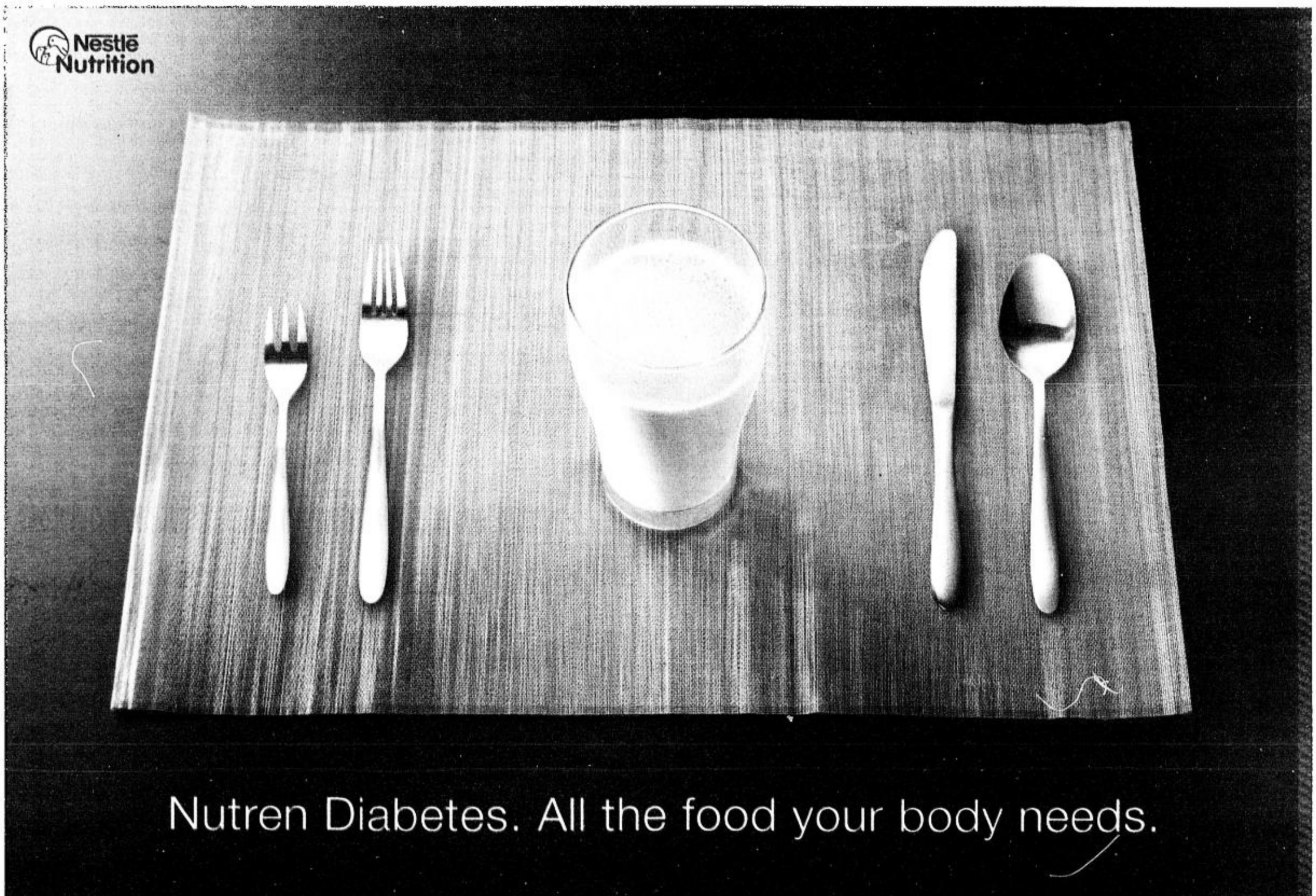
After 50 years, Korea has risen from the ruins and become the 10th largest economy in the world, Castrence noted, adding that Filipinos "have a lot to learn from Korea along that line."

Visiting Manila last year, President Roh said Korean businessmen would continue to invest in the Philippines to "reinforce bonds made stronger through the years."

In 2005, South Korean investments in the Philippines reached P10.82 billion.

Speaking at the center's opening, Castrence said that South Korea "has been helping the Philippines get back on its feet."

"Korea has really been such a big help to the Philippines and our country is grateful to all of you," she said. *With a report from PDI Research*



Sona protesters ...

From page A1

(international code name: Kaemi) is bringing enough rains that could disperse some 30,000 protesters during the President's State of the Nation Address at 4 p.m. today.

Packing maximum sustained winds of 150 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 185 kph, Glenda is stronger than "Florita," the last typhoon that brought days of rain, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

July is the peak of the rainy season, with up to four tropical cyclones entering the country, according to the weather bureau. Glenda is the third tropical cylone this month.

"Dispersing protesters would not be a problem. The police use water (cannons) to disperse them, but with this weather, the protesters would be wet even before they get there (protest areas)," Pagasa weather branch chief Nathaniel Cruz said in a phone interview yesterday.

Cruz said there would be as much rain today as yesterday, when monsoon winds brought heavy rains almost the whole day. The rains would last at least until tomorrow.

"We advise them (protesters) to bring shields against the rain," Cruz said. "The sun is not going to shine as if nothing is happening."

Indoor rally

A spokesperson of a militant group said heavy rains might force protesters to go indoors instead of holding a vigil outside the buildings of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

Carl Ala, information officer of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, said activists had prepared their rain gear and medicine. They expect a number of people to catch cold in the rain.

"It would be a wet Sona. If not water cannons, then Storm Glenda would supply the water," Ala said.

The militant song "Martsa ng Sambayanan" is apt, he said, pointing out a line in it that says, in essence, the storm will not hold the march down.

Pagasa hoisted signal No. 2 in northern Cagayan, Calayan Islands and Batanes. Signal No. 1 was raised in Isabela, Kalinga, Apayao, Abra, Ilocos Norte and the rest of Cagayan.

With Glenda, located 450 km east-southeast of Basco, Batanes, extreme northern Luzon will be hit by heavy rains and gusty winds. The western sections of Luzon and Visayas will experience occasional monsoon rains that could trigger flash floods or landslides.

Cruz, however, said the typhoon, which is moving west-northwest at 15 kph, would not hit any Philippine land mass as it heads toward Taiwan. Coastal waters will be moderate to rough.

Glenda is expected to be 240 km northwest of Basco by tomorrow afternoon and 580 km from the same area by Wednesday before it leaves the Philippine area of responsibility.

"The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms," Pagasa said in its 4:30 p.m. weather bulletin yesterday. *With a report from Luige A. del Puerto*

Tales of cheating cast doubt ...

From page A1

small—continue to cast a cloud of doubt over the June 2006 nursing board licensure exams.

It's this nagging suspicion that might unfairly put to question the competence and future careers of successful examinees that makes graduates like Faye Antolin want to take the board exams again.

Clear the air

Antolin, 27, who placed 10th in the recent exams, was all but unaffected by the controversy.

"I worked hard for it, didn't go to any review center, and fortunately passed," she told the INQUIRER on Saturday. "I'm just saddened that our efforts are somehow affected by the controversy."

"If only to clear the air, I'm willing to take the exams again," said Antolin, a graduate of the Dr. Carlos Lanting College in Quezon City, who also holds a legal management degree from the Ateneo de Manila University.

More serious

The leakage suggested that the cheating was much more serious than the PRC had officially found out, one examinee told the INQUIRER.

Copies of questionnaires—more so the list of the correct answers—are never returned to examinees, the nursing graduate said.

It was also very unlikely that one examinee, under time pressure, would be able to copy all 500 questions and supply all the correct answers afterward, the graduate noted.

Unless one had indeed gotten the questions and answers before the exams.

Strong connections

The examinee with a copy of the alleged leakage told the other examinee that he had copied it from a document provided by his school, three days before the board exams.

The stranger also purportedly bragged that the owner of the school had strong "connections."

Convinced that the reported leak wasn't serious enough to affect the integrity of the test, the PRC earlier released the official results and scheduled the oath-taking ceremony for Aug. 22.

Haste

The University of Santo Tomas College of Nursing earlier criticized the "subsequent haste" with which the PRC had apparently released the results while the controversy remained unresolved.

"This action raises more doubts not only on the integrity of our licensure examination but also on the quality of our country's nursing graduates," it said in a statement. "More specifically, this action tarnishes the image of all the nursing graduates who took (it) this year."

The school wants the oath-taking ceremony suspended until the issue is settled.

After registering an average annual passing rate of 95 percent among schools with more than 100 examinees, UST suddenly recorded 84 percent, purportedly the lowest in its history. A total of 373 UST nursing graduates took the exams in June.

But with two graduates in the top 10 successful examinees, Rene Tadle, president of the nursing faculty association, said the school still performed quite "decently."

Protect integrity of test

"It's not about one institution getting a lower passing rate," he told the INQUIRER. "It's our responsibility as an institution to protect the integrity of the test."

The school isn't buying the PRC decision to remove only 20 questions from Test 3 while supposedly crediting only 10 items in Test 5 because of the leakage.

The PRC computation showed that scores in Tests 1 to 4 were averaged to cover the missing 90 percent in the last test, according to Zenaida Famorca, a nursing teacher since 1978.

Test 5, she explained, was not a minor matter because it dealt with Psychiatric Nursing. It supposedly tests an aspiring nurse on therapeutic communication techniques or on how to deal with different kinds of patients to assess their condition and gather pertinent data.

Appalled

Famorca was also appalled by a seemingly subjective question as told to her by one examinee. The item supposedly claimed that "economic" was the primary reason Filipino nurses were leaving for abroad. It purportedly asked about the second most common reason.

"How do you answer that kind of question when it calls for an examinee's opinion?" she said.

Tens of thousands of Filipinos, including doctors, are taking up nursing because of the huge demand for nurses in rich countries like the United States and Britain.

Last year alone, about 100,000 people graduated from 470 nursing schools nationwide, which had mushroomed over the past few years.

GMA approval rating up to 26%, survey shows

From page A1

demanded that she step down.

She has denied any wrongdoing and vowed to remain in office until her term ends in 2010.

Today, the public's approval rating of the President's performance increased to 26 percent from last year's 19 percent, results of the latest nationwide survey by Pulse Asia Inc. showed.

Her trust level also rose, from 17 to 23 percent.

The survey was conducted from June 24 to July 8 using face-to-face interviews, based on a multistage probability sample of 1,200 representative adults aged 18 years and above.

In Congress, Ms Arroyo has gained more allies, defying expectations of pundits who thought she would be ousted soon after the charges of election fraud were raised last year.

The opposition is due to renew its impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo, charging her with cheating to win the election, exercising dictatorial powers, massive corruption and links to human rights abuses.

Speaker Jose de Venecia is scheduled to refer the complaint to a House committee soon after Congress resumes session today.

The opposition needs to get 78 or one-third of the votes in the 236-member House of Representatives to have the complaint submitted to the opposition-dominated Senate so it could conduct an impeachment trial against Ms Arroyo.

The President survived the first impeachment complaint last year when the opposition failed to get enough votes, getting the support of only 51 members of the House.

The opposition's chances look even slimmer this year as some of its members have defected to Ms Arroyo's camp and the President's allies believe the case will be dismissed by the House where the administration has an overwhelming majority.

Boosting visibility

Despite widespread clamor for her ouster, Ms Arroyo dug in, rallying her supporters and boosting her visibility.

She has since beaten back at least two alleged coup plots by renegade military officers who sought to take advantage of the impeachment controversy.

Although her approval ratings have improved, these are nowhere near her average approval ratings of 46 to 56 percent, and average trust ratings of 40 to 51 percent in 2001 to 2004, according to Pulse Asia.

When she delivers her Sona, she will still be facing a nation with almost one in two Filipinos who disapproves of her performance or who distrusts her.

"No president before her has experienced as extended a period of low public esteem," says Pulse Asia.

Forty-four percent do not approve of the President's performance, while 47 percent distrust her, according to Pulse Asia.

Overall disapproval and distrust levels have both declined from last year, when 58 percent disapproved of her, and 59 percent distrusted her.

The nationwide survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points at the 95-percent confidence level.

Strategy paying off

The President's aggressive strategy seems to have paid off, analysts say.

Reynaldo Trillana, a political science professor at University of Santo Tomas, said the Arroyo administration exploited the opposition's lack of unity and adopted aggressive strategies to handle the crisis.

"They went on the offensive, to manage the crisis in such a way as to divert the attention of the people away from the alleged cheating and toward the debate on changing the Constitution," he said.

Catholic Church

The President has also taken steps to retain the support of the influential Roman Catholic Church and traditionally powerful military.

She "was able to stay in power because of the fact that there are influential social institutions that support her, such as sectors of the Church and the military," said sociologist Antonino Tobias.

"That is why so many promilitary projects and pro-Church programs are being implemented in order to maintain the smooth relationship," he said, referring to the recent hike in the military budget and the abolition of the death penalty, a priority of the Catholic Church.

In a major setback for the opposition, the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines earlier this month refused to support the impeachment process, describing it as an "unproductive political exercise."

Both Trillana and Tobias agreed that the failure to oust Ms Arroyo also showed how apathetic Filipinos had become about politics.

The people would rather have an alleged cheater for President than the only apparent alternatives of Vice President Noli de Castro, a former television presenter, or a military junta, observed Trillana.

But the opposition is not giving up. "We will pursue this impeachment complaint even if the numbers are against us. You (never) know. Miracles can happen," said former government official and anti-Arroyo activist Josefina Lichauco. *Reports from AFP and Kate V. Pedroso, PDI Research*

A$10-M Aussie fund to fight terror

KORONADAL CITY— Australia is increasingly focusing on Mindanao, particularly in the fight against terror, to ensure peace and security in the island-region, Australian Ambassador Anthony John Hely has said.

Hely, who was guest speaker during this city's anniversary celebration on July 18, said Australia's efforts to help the Philippines fight terror include a A$10-million counterterrorism cooperation program.

He said the fund is aimed at boosting the country's capability in law enforcement, immigration and ports and transport security.

Peace and order

Hely said his government has also been working to improve peace and order in Mindanao and, for about 10 years now, Australia has been the largest single donor to the four-phase United Nations Multi-Donor Fund in support of the 1996 peace agreement between the Philippines and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

Australia, he said, was also helping in the ongoing peace talks between the Philippine government and the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Dialogues

"Australia also sponsors national and regional interfaith dialogues among Muslims, Christians and indigenous peoples," he said.

Hely said Australia and the Philippines had close bilateral relations not only because both were English-speaking democracies, were closely allied with the US and shared similar values, but also because they shared the same concern about promoting peace and security in Southeast Asia.

The Philippines faces threats from the Abu Sayyaf, which has been linked to the regional terror group Jemaah Islamiyah.

JI is the Asian arm of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network and has claimed responsibility for the Bali bombings which killed dozens of Australians.

Procedures

As this developed, the Philippine National Police and the Indonesian National Police recently signed a memorandum of understanding which will serve as the basis for formulating standard operating procedures in the two countries' fight against terrorism and transnational crimes.

The MOU was signed following a series of meeting between police representatives from the two countries that began at the 25th Asean Chiefs of Police Conference (Aseanapol) held in Bali, Indonesia, in 2005. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Deadline for the submission of applications and nominations is on August 18, 2006.

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DOLE: C. Visayas got most new jobs

By Jerome Aning

CENTRAL VISAYAS posted the highest employment growth rate among the 16 regions of the country in the first four months of the year, the Department of Labor and Employment said Friday.

Citing the recent Labor Force Survey, Secretary Arturo Brion said Central Visayas, where the economically vibrant Metro Cebu is located, posted 159,000 new jobs—a 6.92 percent increase—in the first trimester of 2006.

As of April, the total number of jobs in the region—composed of the provinces of Cebu, Bohol, Negros Oriental and Siquijor—was 2.459 million compared to 2.3 million in the same period last year.

Brion called the growth "remarkable as it indicates the success of dispersing industries and encouraging growth in job-friendly investments in the regions.

"The [high] employment growth in the Central Visayas... indicates that employment growth is possible outside of the Metro Manila and Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) areas in Luzon," he said.

Influence

He said the increase in employment in Central Visayas influenced three nearby Visayas regions where jobs increased by a total of 191,000 as of last April.

Brion said the rising employment rate was "indispensable to the DOLE's strategic thrust to build a gainfully employed, globally competitive, secure and safe Filipino workforce, in consonance with the national interest."

Jobs growth in the Central Visayas and other regions, he added, were an important part of the effort of President Macapagal-Arroyo to develop the four "super regions" of the country.

The DOLE's regional offices in the Visayas, meanwhile, have continued to pursue the department's thrust of ensuring the provision of "safety nets" for workers, through employment facilitation undertaken mainly by the Public Employment Service Offices (Peso).

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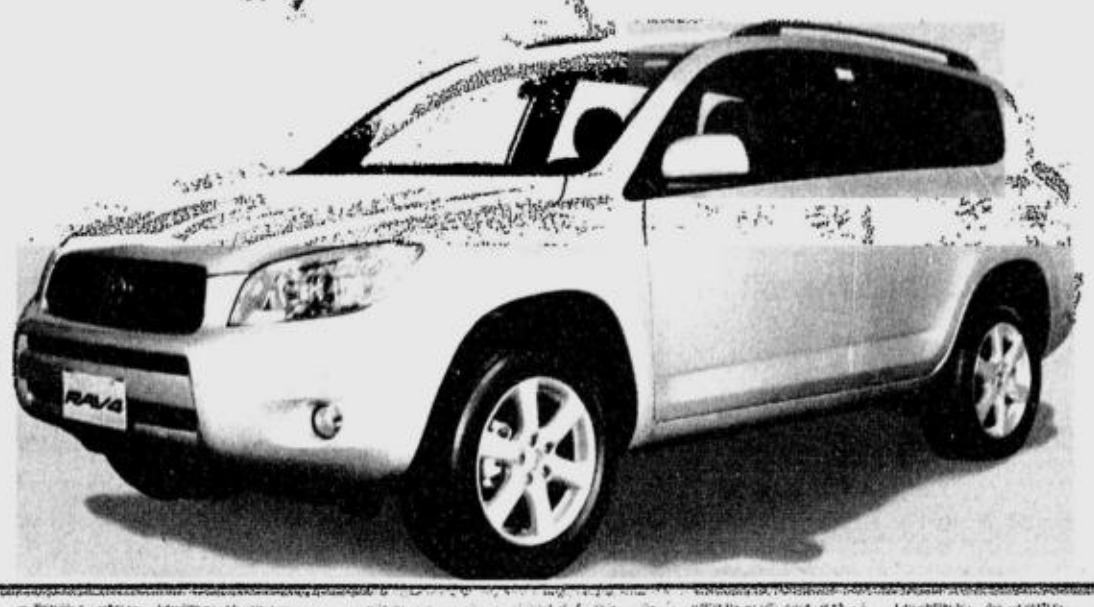

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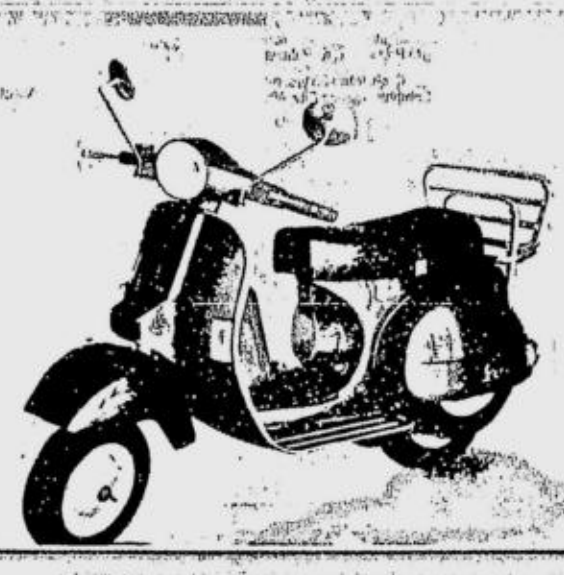

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Mercy Sinarao
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Visayas / Mindanao

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Purok Palmera, San Pedro Dist., Pagadian City

Deva V. Devilles
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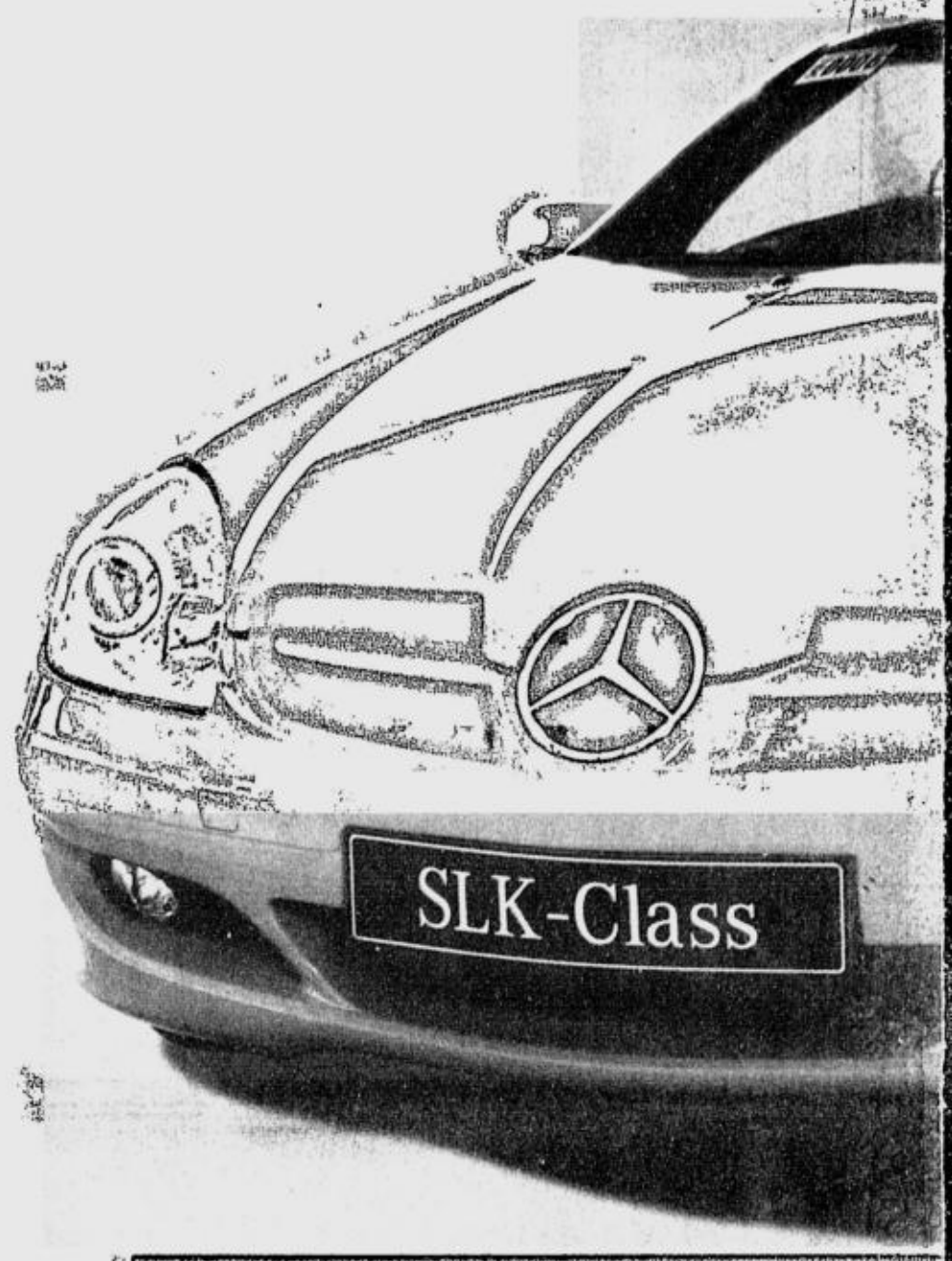

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Dagat-dagatan, Navotas

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Malabon City

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520th ABW, Villamor Air Base, Pasay City

Michael Pingol, 30 yrs. old,
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Taguig City

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OPINION

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In the rut

A YEAR AGO, THERE WAS A REAL INTEREST IN what the President would say, and how she would say it, during the annual rite of political passage that is the State of the Nation Address. There is considerably less interest today, palpably less public curiosity, as President Macapagal-Arroyo prepares to take the speaker's podium at the Batasan for the sixth straight time. The difference is evidence that the President has survived the most turbulent 12 months of her political life.

EDITORIAL

It is not proof, however, that the crisis of legitimacy that haunts her has become a thing of the past, a mere—albeit nightmarish—memory.

We can expect today's speech to indulge in the rhetoric of sweet revenge. When senior members of her administration—the so-called Hyatt 10—called on her to resign last July, they relied heavily on the argument from practicality. "At the core of these concerns are the issues of leadership and credibility—the ability of our President to continue to lead and govern our country with the trust and confidence of our people." Their reading of the political situation echoed that of former president Corazon Aquino, who also called on the President to make the "supreme sacrifice" of resignation. She said she had come to the conclusion that for "the country in its present tumultuous state, good and effective government has become an impossible undertaking."

We can, rightly, argue over the key definitions. But on key indices, there is no arguing with the data. The economy has continued to grow; the peso, while experiencing some recent turbulence, remains reasonably healthy; a balanced budget is closer to reality. We can expect today's speech to emphasize these and other such numbers, because they are the President's answer to the charge that the political crisis had effectively limited her capacity to govern.

To be sure, the language of praise from the Palace and its allies can get overheated; witness all this talk about the President being an economic Superman (politics, it is said, is her kryptonite). This is patent nonsense; the economy is not moribund, contrary to fears raised a year ago. But it has not taken off, either. Talk of superheroes is decidedly premature, when the economy is still playing catch-up.

Last year, Ms Arroyo resurrected a theme from her 2004 campaign, and spoke of two countries: one that is on the (perpetual) verge of an economic takeoff, and another that is mired in destructive politics. Unfortunately, she is president of both. If we go by the administration's record, especially in the last 12 months—and if that dual nature she described continues to faithfully reflect reality—then we must be wary of letting the economic good news bury the sordid truths of politics.

The political reality is: We are even more mired in destructive politics today than we were a year ago. The President's directive last year, to start the "great debate" on Charter change, helped set the political agenda and distract public attention from her crisis of legitimacy. But it also let a host of aggressive political players loose in the public square, whose strident advocacy of immediate Charter change betrays a chilling disregard of opposition.

The President's decisions since last year's Sona, especially the calibrated preemptive response policy, Executive Order 464 and Proclamation 1017—the unholy trinity of anti-democratic initiatives—released more toxins into the political air. (There was a time, in the old, pre-Garci tape days, when Speaker Jose de Venecia was wont to describe the political poison in the air with pithy eloquence.) The result in the last 12 months has not only been more incivility in politics, but greater destructiveness.

The President's refusal to be held accountable for the charges of election fraud implied in the Garci tapes is one reason why we are today deeper in the rut. That, in sum, is the argument from cause and effect.

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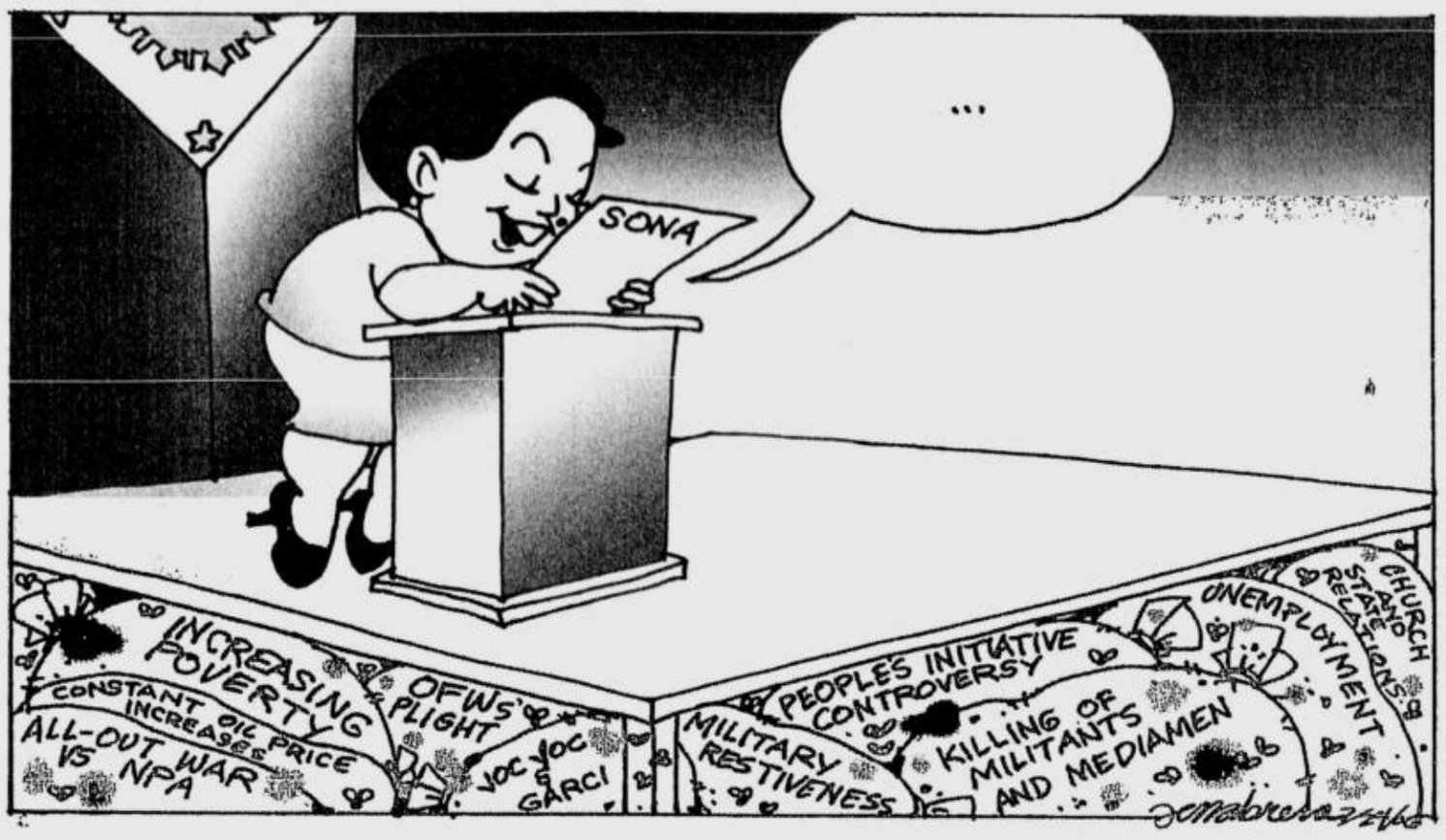

Fairy tales at today's Sona

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

DO YOU STILL REMEMBER THE WEEKLY series of stories in Liwayway magazine called "Mga Kwento ni Lola Basyang"? The baby-boomers probably don't, but their parents surely do. (A collection of the best stories from the series is being published.)

In the series, a grandmother (Lola Basyang) narrates to her grandchildren fairy tales of princes and princesses and fairies and sorcerers. The stories were very popular during their time, and Liwayway readers waited expectantly for the next story because it provided them with an escape from the harsh realities of life. The stories always ended happily, the kings and queens and princes and princesses and their subjects always lived happily ever after.

The same fairy tales are still being told, except that we now call them Sonas, or State of the Nation Addresses. In Sonas, the President lies with a straight face and tells the people how lucky they are that he or she is the President because he or she has made their life very good and prosperous. The people, of course, know better and think that the President must be talking about another nation, not theirs, even as hunger gnaws at their insides. But they go through this charade year after year because, like the readers of Lola Basyang, the Sonas provide them with an escape from the sufferings of daily life. For one day, at least, the President's fairy tales make them believe that all's well and right with their world.

This is what's going to happen again today as President Macapagal-Arroyo delivers her 2006 Sona and paints the picture of a prosperous and happy place—like Camelot—and an incredibly lucky people for having her as their President.

There will be thunder and lightning as the heavens protest the lies that will be uttered today; but they will be concentrated around the Batasan where GMA will deliver her Sona, which will be enriched with statistics. After all, as somebody said, there are three kinds of lies: lies, damn lies and statistics. Our President use all three, but there will be more of the third today.

Government statistics are supposed to be credible. When the government says something, it is supposed to be the truth. Not anymore. Government statistics have been corrupted and fudged under the Arroyo administration. When the government says, for example, that there are enough classrooms, that means packing 100 students into each classroom. Before, when you have no job, you are jobless, period. Now, if you happen to land a part-time job once during the year, you are listed as "employed." Also now, the government has reduced the number of poverty-stricken families by simply lowering the poverty level.

It is because we will never get to know the true state of the nation from the President's Sona that we will present at today's Kapihan sa Manila (Hotel) the true state of the nation as seen from the other side. Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and former Sen. Francisco Tatad will deliver their own Sonas.

* * *

I read in the newspapers recently that Meralco, or the Lopez group, is not interested in bidding for the Masinloc power plant should it be offered for another bidding after the failure of the sale to YNN Consortium. But what is this statement from Meralco defending its ongoing negotiations with YNN for a supply contract?

People in the power industry say that Meralco is trying to justify the supply contract as a "take-and-pay" or "dispatchable" contract, which means that Meralco consumers will pay only for the kilowatt hours that are used.

Sounds good, isn't it? But wait till you hear of a similar take-and-pay scheme concluded by Meralco with Duracom. Yes, the same company owned by the owner of YNN.

Duracom has also a take-and-pay contract for its 200-megawatt, oil-fired power generating barges, with Meralco selling at the high price of P7.50 per kWh. The Duracom contract has been reserved by Meralco for the purpose of "load following" and "voltage regulation." This means that Duracom will keep our lights and appliances from flickering and fluctuating (this is caused by unstable power from the grid).

But Duracom, it has turned out, not only serves as a source of power for voltage regulation but also as a main source of power.

If the power from Duracom were used merely to prevent electricity from flickering, its barges would be dispatched by Meralco for only about 10 to 15 percent of its capacity on the average. In reality, however, the Duracom barges are dispatched, on orders of Meralco, at an annual average of between 40 and 50 percent of their capacity.

This means that Duracom's barges are dispatched by Meralco more than all of Napocor's oil-fired power plants combined. This, despite Napocor's oil-burning power plants having a capacity that's almost five times larger and offering cheaper power rates.

Question: Why is Meralco so enthusiastic in using Duracom's power barges when it is under no obligation to do so? Remember, it is supposed to be a "take-and-pay" contract that the power utilities have between the two of them.

Answer: Duracom sets aside from its supply contract 20 to 25 centavos per kWh as "marketing fees." The fees flow all the way to its holding firm, YNN Holdings Corp. Yes, the same YNN involved in the sale of Masinloc.

These "marketing fees" run to as high as P250 million a year. Who is benefiting from this windfall?

Despite this anomalous arrangement, Duracom creditors keep their mouths shut because the marketing fees are the only way by which they can be paid. They have been told that without the marketing fees, the barges wouldn't be dispatched and their loans wouldn't be paid.

This should warn us of bigger things to happen if YNN again gets a supply contract with Meralco for the Masinloc plant. This is because Masinloc is three times bigger than Duracom.

Straight from the horse's mouth

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

TODAY, GMA WILL SAY MANY things and promise many things in her State of the Nation Address. In the past, she said many things and promised many things in seminal speeches and statements. These include:

* * *

"I believe that we can create a strong and modern Philippine Republic, but it will take personal sacrifice from each one of us.

"As we honor Jose Rizal today, it is fitting that I ask each Filipino to also sacrifice for our country. Our country needs our help.

"In recent years, our fundamental weaknesses have been revealed in ways that are worrisome to broad sectors of our citizenry.

"In the economy, ever since the Asian crisis in 1997, our public revenues have been steadily declining in relation to the size of our economy. This has led to persistent budget deficit.

"In society, we have become a nation deeply divided, symbolized by the polarity between Edsa II and the May 1 siege barely three months after Edsa II.

"And in governance, there is now too much politics hampering good, productive governance.

"The convergence of the national stresses such as these has led to the sense of gloom that many of our citizens now talk of. There is a feeling of too much negativism and conflict in our society.

"In the coming weeks, we will be launching a series of powerful, positive actions that will improve the life of our people.

"Major announcements will be made in January.

"However, we also know that we will soon enter the political period leading up to the elections in 2004. My reading on the political winds tells me that the 2004 election may well go down in history as among our most bitterly contested elections ever. This is because of the deep social and political division that we now have.

"If this is true, then sincere efforts to launch programs will run the risk of being derailed by political fighting leading up to the elections.

"The government in place after 2004 may merely end up inheriting a country as deeply divided as ever. Consequently, we may end up stalling national growth for a few years more as a result of lost momentum.

"In view of all these factors, I have decided not to run for President during the election of 2004.

"If I were to run, it will require a major political effort on my part. But since I'm among the principal figures in the divisive national events for the last two or three years, my political efforts can only result in never-ending divisiveness.

"On the other hand, relieved of the burden of politics, I can devote the last year and half of my administration to the following:

"First, strengthening economy; to create more jobs and to encourage business activities that is unhampered by corruption and red tape in government.

"Second, healing the deep divisions within our society.

"Third, working for clean and honest elections in 2004.

"If we achieve these, my successor as president will be in a good position to lead the Philippines through the next decisive steps for the strong and modern society. United, we can see this dream come true within our lifetime.

"Thus, I appeal to each Filipino to help in this endeavor. Following the example of Jose Rizal, let us think of country and not just of self." (December 2002)

* * *

GMA: "So will I still lead by 1 million overall?"

Garci: "*Pipilitin ho natin 'yan.*" ("We will do everything to make it so.")

("Hello Garci" tape, May-June 2004. GMA made no less than 15 calls to Garci for several weeks after the elections. As a result, she got a lead of more than half a million in Muslim Mindanao, universally regarded as FPJ's bailiwick.)

* * *

"I was anxious to protect my votes and during that time had conversations with many people, including a Comelec official. My intent was not to influence the outcome of the election, and it did not. As I mentioned, the election has already been decided and the votes counted. And as you remember, the outcome had been predicted by every major public opinion poll, and adjudged free, fair and decisive by international election observers, and our own Namfrel.

"That said, let me tell you how I personally feel. I recognize that making any such call was a lapse in judgment. I am sorry. I also regret taking so long to speak before you on this matter. I take full responsibility for my actions and to you and to all those good citizens who may have had their faith shaken by these events, I want to assure you that I have redoubled my efforts to serve the nation and earn your trust." (July 2005).

* * *

"President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is willing to face any impeachment complaint in order to quell the political turmoil in the country, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said on Tuesday.

"Bunye said even if they perceive the impeachment complaint as a complete waste of the 'people's time' the President would be more than willing to face the charge as Malacañang sees no other way to end the 'political grandstanding and mudslinging.'

"'The President did not violate the Constitution. But if this move is the only way to put a stop to the prevailing political grandstanding and mudslinging, then we welcome (it).'" (news report, July 2005)

* * *

Today, GMA will say many things and promise many things in her State of the Nation Address. Question is: Do you still believe her?

Ombudsman vs commissioners

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IN THE BROUHAHA about Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos et al. and the Ombudsman, there are several questions that must be asked: (1) Who may the Ombudsman investigate? (2) May an impeachable officer be investigated by her? (3) May an impeachable officer be summoned in an investigation about his actions? (4) May an impeachable officer be charged for offenses committed?

As to the scope of the Ombudsman's power to investigate, the constitutional provision is couched in very general and sweeping terms. Among the powers of the Ombudsman is the power to "investigate on its own, or on complaint by any person, any act or omission of any public official, employee, office or agency, when such act or omission appears to be illegal, unjust, improper, or inefficient." In fact, the Constitution commands that the Ombudsman and her deputies, "as protectors of the people, shall act promptly on complaints filed in any form or manner against public officials or employees." Thus, before the Ombudsman can act, there is no need for a formal complaint. Nor is there need for prodding from the Supreme Court. The investigation can begin even on a complaint sent via telephone, e-mail or fax.

I do not see why the Ombudsman cannot look into the activities of impeachable officers. The Ombudsman, after all, may and should recommend impeachment where proper. But how can she recommend impeachment if she knows nothing about what the officer has done?

Having said that, however, the next question is whether an impeachable officer may be summoned by the Ombudsman to answer questions about accusations against him or her. Indeed, the Ombudsman may investigate the activities of an impeachable officer. Investigating such officer, however, can be done by questioning the aides and others who work with the officer or by asking them to submit documents. But the officer involved need not be summoned. If summoned, however, must an impeachable officer respond by appearing to answer the summons?

Here we enter into another area of constitutional law which affects not just impeachable officers but all persons. No person may be compelled to be a witness against himself. This means that no person may be compelled to answer incriminating questions. Moreover, if a person is an accused in a criminal case, he has the right to refuse to take the witness stand. If a person is not an accused, the right against self-incrimination arises only when an incriminating question is asked.

Generally, also, a respondent summoned to an administrative investigation has no right to refuse to take the witness stand. Like a witness who is not an accused, his right is to refuse to answer an incriminating question when asked. However, there have been cases where the Court has recognized the right of a respondent in an administrative case to refuse to take the witness stand. When can this happen?

In instances where the administrative proceeding partakes of the nature of a criminal proceeding, the Court has recognized the right of a respondent to refuse to take the witness stand. Thus, for instance, an administrative proceeding for the forfeiture of property under the Anti-Graft Law was deemed analogous to a criminal proceeding, and the respondent was accorded the right to refuse to take the witness stand. Similarly, a medical doctor respondent in an administrative investigation for immorality and malpractice was accorded a similar right since the revocation of his license as a medical practitioner could even be a more serious deprivation than forfeiture of property.

We must therefore ask why members of the Comelec would be summoned by the Ombudsman. I doubt that it would be for a friendly drink or two or in search of evidence for their beatification. Considering what many are saying about the Mega Pacific deal, the summons could be a prelude to consequences more serious than forfeiture of property or even disbarment. Thus, we must ask whether the Comelec members being investigated for their involvement in the computer deal may be summoned to testify. Should they rather appear and wait until an incriminating question is asked? Or can they presume that they are being summoned to answer incriminating questions and thus avail of the right of an accused in a criminal case to refuse to take the witness stand? I would think that they are being invited to their crucifixion.

The final question is whether officers removable only by impeachment may be charged. But charged where? Certainly verified impeachment complaints may be filed against them before the House of Representatives. The President is removable only by impeachment, but right now the House of Representatives is raining with impeachment complaints against her. Similarly no one is prevented from filing impeachment complaints against election commissioners. What may not be done is to charge them before a criminal court or before the Supreme Court for their disbarment while still in office. Criminal or disbarment charges will be entertained only after they leave office either voluntarily or on conviction in an impeachment proceeding.

It is important to make clear that impeachable officers are not entitled to immunity from liability for possible criminal acts or for violations of the Canons of Judicial Ethics or other forms of misbehavior. What the law prescribes is a fundamental requirement before they may be made to answer criminally or administratively. They must first be removed from office. In the case of the Comelec commissioners, the rule is founded on the need for maintaining their independence in the exercise of their constitutionally given authority. But, of course, independence should not be abused or misused!

'Nabubulok' and 'Hindi Nabubulok'

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Carlos Isagani T. Zarate

RANKED SINCE 1999 BY THE ASIAN INSTITUTE of Management (AIM) as among the country's top five metropolis, Davao City has certainly gone a long way from its reputation decades ago as the laboratory for the communist guerrillas' urban warfare and the birthplace of anti-communist vigilante groups, like the dreaded Alsa Masa.

Despite the present economic crunch, it has maintained a vibrant economy which—though still mainly based on agricultural and semi-industrial enterprises—is positioning itself to aggressively compete with other tourism-driven economies like Cebu and Metro Manila.

Although, its relatively encouraging peace and order climate was shaken briefly by the twin-bombings in 2003; and, now and then, by anti-crime death squads, the city continues to pride itself as the economic and political center of Mindanao. But it is also fast catching up with the failings that typify a growing metropolis.

Take, for example, the related issues of flooding and garbage disposal. As part of its clean-up drive leading to the Asean Tourism Forum it hosted last January, the local government put up at least 20,000 new garbage bins, mostly along the city's major thoroughfares and centers. Spread out in pairs of different colors—the green one for non-biodegradable and the grey one for biodegradable materials (with big markings of "*Nabubulok*" and "*Hindi Nabubulok*")—the garbage bins easily have become one of the most noticeable sights to residents and visitors alike.

Compactor trucks collect at least twice a day the waste materials deposited in these bins, for delivery to the city's dump in Carmen district.

In addition, the city's environment office has also required each barangay unit to put up a materials recovery facility (MRF), where recyclables—like used bottles, newspapers, magazines, used rubber, etc.—may be brought for resale by residents. The local chamber of commerce has also made its pitch by sponsoring to buy the recyclable materials collected by the barangay units or by the residents. On top of this, the tough-talking Mayor Rodrigo Duterte regularly warns in his regular weekly TV and radio program that he will run after garbage violators and throw them in the city's dump.

Thus, since January, "*nabubulok*" and "*hindi nabubulok*" have become household buzzwords among city residents; more so, after the distribution of the "solid waste disposal guide," which not only specifies the corresponding penalties but also warns that the garbage of those who fail to segregate "will not be collected."

But, despite all these efforts, garbage in a growing metropolis like Davao, remains a real problem. Only last Friday, during a sudden downpour, several main roads were easily flooded, stalling traffic for a long time. Although blamed on the city's decrepit drainage system, the flooding—in recent years, a regular experience during the rainy season—was undeniably largely caused by garbage and other discarded materials that clogged the drainage lines.

With 245,000 households and a population of at least 1.5 million, the city's 20,000 garbage bins certainly are not enough. The Duterte administration is thinking of buying 50,000 more bins from a planned P110-million loan from the Land Bank; but even that is still a long way from solving the city's garbage problem. Where to finally dump this garbage is another one big question. One dump is simply not enough, as shown by the experience of Payatas and Smokey Mountain in Metro Manila.

Although there is no quick-fix solution to the garbage problem, I think it is high time that we took a closer look at where these "litter" really come from. For example, more and more companies, in Davao City and elsewhere, now prefer to use plastic bottles and wrappers for their products. These materials can be recycled but only for a limited number of times. Ultimately, they have to be discarded. While consumers share the blame for the improper disposal of waste materials, I think much of the blame falls squarely on the manufacturers that definitely amass huge profits by promoting "throw-aways" as a consumerist culture.

Yes, garbage is a real problem. We must segregate. We must separate "*nabubulok*" and "*hindi nabubulok.*" We must recycle. Yet, we must also seriously address the question of reducing garbage from its source.

Next to governance and social services—then and now—garbage is not only an economic but also a political issue.

* * *

This one is really "*bulok.*" The Arroyo administration has officially abolished the death penalty; yet, the death sentence—the "unofficial" one, that is—continues to be imposed as shown in the killing of crusading journalists, administration critics and members of militant and progressive organizations identified with the Left. The latest casualty in the Davao region was Armando Pace, a commentator of Radyo Ukay, dxDS in Digos City. He was (so far) the ninth journalist killed this year. Meanwhile, two of our women colleagues in the year-old Union of Peoples' Lawyers in Mindanao (UPLM)—lawyers Beverly Selim-Musni of Cagayan de Oro City and Connie Brizuela—are being subjected to threats and surveillance by armed men because of their human rights advocacy. Madame President, instead of promising us once again the "stars that are aligned," "enchanted kingdom" and "super regions" during your State of the Nation Address today, why not use your powers to rein in the "dogs of war" that are sowing terror in the hearts and homes of hapless civilians?

* * *

Comments at kar_laws@yahoo.com or karlos_z23@hotmail.com

Roll out the barrel

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO GOES TO the Batasan today to reassure her *gobernadorcillos* and *cabezas de barangay* that their *principalia* strategy of clinging to her skirts is still worth it: *¡Una república para nosotros, solo nosotros, desde ahora y para siempre!* Or as certain sympathetic archbishops might put it, "*in saecula saeculorum*, Amen."

For the rest, it will be like that scene in "The Gulag Archipelago," where, after Stalin had concluded a speech, the nomenklatura began to clap—and couldn't stop clapping, because the first one to stop would be seen as disloyal and might end up being shot! After half an hour of increasingly frantic applause, the entire audience stopped clapping, all at the same time, upon the prompting of some kind of organic telepathy.

The same thing happened in last year's State of the Nation Address; it will take place again today—with the added pressure of Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon's eagle eyes hunting for signs of less-than-extreme loyalty.

Perched on her throne of bayonets, Ms Arroyo will also bring forward the mascots of her regime, and will try to bask in the applause deserved by them but not by her.

Meanwhile, Mt. Mayon seethes with the kind of volcanic fury that echoes the late Raul Roco's deathbed indignation over what Ms Arroyo had done to democracy. Filipinos watch the foreign news anxiously for developments in Lebanon and the rest of the Middle East. Dark clouds everywhere, and the Palace turns on the klieg lights and says, voila, sunshine!

The mettle of a leader is always best measured during times of crisis. And crisis management has been: roll out the barrel.

At the time of the last Sona, I said that having wrapped herself in the mantle of constitutional change—to which she was committed as a matter of principle but which she pursues only as a matter of expedience—Ms Arroyo would do the rational reexamination of our form of government a profound disservice, from which the sincere efforts of the proponents of a parliamentary and unicameral government, and of federalism (the only genuinely innovative and potentially positive revolutionary idea in the past 50 years) would never recover.

No greater proof of this is there than Jose Abueva. From him has come a Jurassic roar of indignation over an SWS survey asking if people favor the President's proposed constitution. Unfair, he said, to link the proposed Charter changes with the most unpopular and despised leader our country has ever seen. Yet the link was not only made, but forged in heavy, iron chains of public opinion. The President herself proclaimed last year that constitutional change was her baby. Neither Abueva nor the President can now suddenly disclaim Charter change's presidential maternity. Today, Ms Arroyo will announce an elaborate patronage scheme, and proclaim it as the first step toward federalism.

It is not. She will be sharing her own enormous slush fund, yes; but she dares not risk the patronage funds of Congress, used by congressmen to maintain patronage networks to neutralize their traditional rivals—the governors who compete with congressmen for the support of mayors. Actually, reducing the control of the central government, and channeling resources to the provinces—which, under genuine federalism, can help themselves instead of supporting the parasites at the Batasan—can never happen. Not under Ms Arroyo, and not if her congressional allies have their way.

Ms Arroyo is like a barrel of gunpowder strapped to the question of constitutional change; and around her have rallied the traditional political leadership in the hope that they can form a human shield to prevent someone from reaching the barrel and setting light to its fuse. What we have been seeing is a madcap game of tag, in which people rush to join the human shield to prevent the explosion; or decide to leave and find a way to either detonate the explosive or douse it and, thus, neutralize it.

With the fear of change comes the abandonment of sanity and reason. The snotty fury of the administration and its supporters has been motivated by confusing the superficial for the real: having decided that an attack on Ms Arroyo is an attack on an entire way of life, her human shield has anchored its defense on its contempt for the born-on-the-wrong-side-of-the-tracks déclassé earnestness of Dinky Soliman; on its a bloodthirsty hatred of radicals, which ignores the reasons so many Filipinos rebel in the first place; and on a college fraternity mentality that refuses to acknowledge a basic lesson one normally learns in school: while cheating always takes place, not every cheater gets caught—but once one is, the book must be thrown at the cheater, regardless of whether or not other accomplices are discovered.

Instead of finding measures to restore confidence in democracy, those in the human shield have decided to question its fundamental assumptions, one of which is that we have no choice but to trust a national electorate. That is not new thinking; it is as old as the political families allied to the Palace. Its present renewed lease on life can only be temporary.

* * *

Administration bishops should carefully compare the text of Sigaw ng Bayan's full-page Sunday ad, specifically the following lines—"Sigaw ng Bayan have never hidden our identities and our specific interests. We're local officials, professionals, small businessmen, office workers. Our name is Legion, for we are many"—to the Gospel of Mark, 5:1-18. The bishops will understand me when I say, *quod erat demonstrandum.*

* * *

Tomorrow evening, on "The Explainer" on ANC at 6 p.m., "Lebanon: the crisis and its background." Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph.

Social accountability, stronger democracy

COMMENTARY

Sixto Donato C. Macasaet

REMEMBER MANG PANDOY? REMEMBER JAYSON, JOMAR and Edwin who wrote their dreams on paper boats and sent these down Pasig River to Malacañang? What about Angelo dela Cruz? Government focused on them in the past in attempts to put human faces to State of the Nation Addresses (Sonas).

The third regular session of Congress opens today, and President Macapagal-Arroyo will deliver yet another Sona. But what does the Sona mean for us, anyway?

The Sona summarizes the accomplishments of the Arroyo administration in the past year and its major thrusts and priorities for the year ahead. It is related to the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP), which defines the government's development strategy, major programs and commitments.

The 2004-2010 MTPDP was approved in October 2004. In her foreword to the plan, Ms Arroyo said: "Knowing that so much is at stake in such task, I have thus involved myself seriously in the formulation of the MTPDP .... My main consideration for the plan is that it must generate positive impact and must be doable."

The plan has 277 pages and 25 chapters. It can be very technical and uninteresting. Yet the MTPDP and its annual "highlights" do affect the lives of millions of Mang Pandoys, Jaysons, Jomars, Edwins and Angelos. Even a quick scan of the MTPDP's contents shows this.

The plan promises, for example, that by 2010, two million hectares of new land will be developed for agribusiness; that 18 to 23 large-scale mining projects will be pursued, bringing in $4-6 billion in investments; that 80,000 urban poor families will be relocated by the NorthRail and SouthRail projects. The plan also aims to bring down poverty incidence from 28.4 percent of the population in 2000 to 17.9 percent in 2010.

The Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) and other civil society organizations (CSOs) have conducted periodic assessments of every incumbent administration's performance—starting with President Ramos'—to see how each has fared relative to their respective MTPDPs.

This year's MTPDP assessment for the Arroyo administration focuses on macro-economy, agriculture and agrarian reform, environment, housing and constitutional reform.

The assessment team is composed of Dr. Cielito Habito and Dr. Edsel Beja Jr. of the Economics Department of the Ateneo de Manila University, Ernesto Lim Jr. of the People's Campaign for Agrarian Reform Network (AR Now!), Roy Cabonegro of Sustainability Watch, Dr. Anna Marie Karaos and Junefe Payot of the Institute on Church and Social Issues (Icsi) and Socrates Banzuela of the Citizens for ConCon (C4CC).

They reviewed the MTPDP and previous Sonas, gathered data from government agencies and CSOs and conducted roundtable discussions with civil society and government representatives to validate and refine the draft assessment reports. (The highlights of the MTPDP assessment will be presented at a conference on July 25, 2006 and the assessment report will be published and made available at www.codengo.org soon after.)

The assessment team finds that the Arroyo administration has performed poorly in the past two years. There is certainly much room for improvement; the assessment makes some key recommendations. The most notable are: more assertive debt management, stronger leadership over socialized housing programs and demobilizing the people's initiative and the constituent assembly option in favor of a Constitutional Convention to address the Charter change issue.

What are some of the highlights of this year's MTPDP assessment?

First, the macro-economic record of the government is mixed. The peso finished significantly stronger in 2005, the stock market was up and the year-end government budget deficit was well below what had been projected. But the growth of most production sectors slowed down in 2005 and most growth targets were missed.

Second, the other two important economic indicators that matter most to common folk—prices and jobs—similarly turned for the worse. Also, more direct indicators of human welfare had further worsened, including nutrition and access to education.

Third, the assessment also shows that the MTPDP targets are not enough to respond to the needs in two important reform areas: agrarian reform and housing. The targets for housing cover only 30 percent of the backlog for 2005-2010.

Fourth, the MTPDP proclaims that the government will complete its land distribution program in 2008, but the annual target of the Department of Agrarian Reform is only 100,000 hectares, compared to the 216,000 to 481,000 hectares required per year. Worse, the annual target, inadequate as it is, has not been met in past years.

Finally, the political crisis that has affected the country since mid-2005 has marred the administration's performance versus its MTPDP commitments. This is most evident in the MTPDP's endorsement of the constitutional convention (ConCon) as the mode of constitutional change to Ms Arroyo's push for a constituent assembly in her July 2005 Sona.

This MTPDP assessment is one example of social accountability.

A World Bank Social Development Paper (No. 76) defines social accountability as "an approach ... that relies on civic engagement, that is, in which it is ordinary citizens and/or civil society organizations who participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability."

In short, social accountability means ordinary Filipinos, as individuals or as organized groups, asking government officials to account for their performance and conduct.

This kind of accountability is important in promoting good governance and in developing more effective and responsive government programs.

Many NGOs, people's organizations and other CSOs here and in other countries have initiated and implemented various social accountability mechanisms, including participatory planning and budgeting, public expenditure tracking, citizens' report cards and citizens' monitoring. They recognize that the government's internal accountability systems (e.g., internal financial controls, audits, legislative investigations, regular accomplishment reports, impeachment) while necessary, are not enough to ensure effectiveness, responsiveness and integrity. Social and "external" accountability mechanisms should complement internal accountability.

We call on more citizens and citizens' groups to start their own social accountability initiatives or join existing ones. We also hope that government will support social accountability efforts. Good governance is not only about government, but also about active citizens. A strong democracy lives through an empowered people.

Sixto Donato C. Macasaet is executive director of CODE-NGO, a network of 10 national and regional NGO networks with more than 2,000 affiliated NGOs, POs and cooperatives nationwide; his e-mail address is scmacasaet@codengo.org.

Calderon not the problem

IT IS NOT FAIR TO NEWLY DESIGNATED PNP Director General Oscar Calderon that some sectors carp about his being a relative of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Records show that he has admirably performed as a soldier, adhering strictly to the code of honor, a gentleman with no record of having lied or cheated. Furthermore, he is the most senior among the candidates for PNP chief. It is not his fault if he is a relative of public officials of suspect moral behavior. One cannot choose his relatives and he cannot be held responsible for his distant cousins' aberrant conduct.

The problem is with GMA who has miserably failed in the cardinal demand of leadership to inspire trust and confidence, such that her every move is suspect in the eyes of a vast majority of the population. It seems that she mires everyone she touches. Take for example the "Hello Garci" generals. GMA may reward them with promotions and choice appointments after retirement. But the reward will not compensate for the stigma of dishonorable conduct. Of the dedicated and honest officers and enlisted men (retired and active), there will be a festering feeling of resentment of having been betrayed.

Until the content of the Mayuga Report (specifically, on the generals implicated in widespread cheating on behalf of GMA in the last elections) is made public, the perception is damning to those involved; and demoralizing to the rest of an organization said to have been used for immoral ends. In this respect, GMA has caused a dangerous rift within the armed services, which she is trying to mend by intensifying war efforts against a common enemy (the NPA) in the hope that the exercise will serve as a "bonding glue" (to use her words) for a common cause that will distract the ranks from a sense of nagging shame. Sadly, it will be the lowly troops and helpless unarmed peasants who will bear the irreparable damage of a war staged as a smoke-screen for failed governance.

No President has caused so dangerous a dissension within the armed services as GMA has. The woman is beyond redemption. It is hoped that civil society can come up with peaceful means within the Constitution that would remove this menace to our democratic tradition, without dragging the military establishment into the fray.

—EP DAKANAY JR.,
43 Baltazar St., Philamlife Village, Pamplona, Las Piñas City

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Look outside the box, sugar industry told

THE FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE TITLED "LIFE sweeter for sugar farmers" (PDI, 7/6/06) underscored a lingering problem of the sugar industry in the Philippines—the boxed-in mindset and the lack of creativity and dynamism in the sugar R&D sector. This problem is little discussed, if at all, so it is about time that the industry faced up to this truth, so that the challenges that go with the changing times are addressed with new ideas.

For example, Leon Arceo, director general of the privately run Philippine Sugar Research Institute (Philsurin), as quoted by the article, said that the Philippines has "higher costs because tiny farm sizes discouraged mechanization" and that "the boom was hiding the problem of the decline in yields for sugar farms that were subjected to land reform." As the point man of the better-funded Philsurin (the organization that should have filled in for the shortcomings of the Sugar Regulatory Administration, a regulatory government agency that also dabbles in sugar research), Arceo's mindset should have been that of marshalling his institution's resources to come up with farming systems that preserve the productivity of sugar lands despite the small-sized farms that have resulted from land reform. How to do this should test his mettle. But I have one suggestion: look outside the box.

But perhaps this would be asking too much of Arceo. After all, Philsurin is controlled by big planters who, understandably, want to hold on to their big landholdings. How then could he channel R&D resources toward the evolution of small-farm production technologies? That would be tantamount to biting the hand that feeds (him).

The salvation of land-reformed sugar lands now lies outside of what Philsurin is doing (which is mainly sugarcane breeding). And for that, Philsurin has not even put out a sugarcane variety of its own—in truth, the varieties that were responsible for the sugar production boom in recent years were bred by the Victorias Milling Company's now-defunct R&D department. The salvation of small farms lies in small-farm management research, in agricultural engineering (appropriate machinery for small farms, or small-scale irrigation systems), in small-farmer education (production manuals in the vernacular, for example), in microfinance and, in many more approaches and ideas that abound and can be found, yes, outside the box.

The dilemma is that it is not in the best interest of the people and institutions that now handle the resources (needed to undertake these things) to operate outside the box. The technologies that will enable small farms to become productive will scuttle the only major argument against land reform—the supposed decline in the productivity of land-reformed areas.

—ROBERTO A. ALABAN JR.,
Victorias Eco-Center, Hacienda Estrella, Victorias City, Negros Occidental

Breastfeeding always the best

I CONGRATULATE HEALTH SECretary Francisco Duque for signing the revised implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the National Milk Code. It is a triumph in the fight to reduce child deaths and malnutrition in the Philippines and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The revised IRR will enable government to eliminate false and misleading advertising, purge the health sector of milk company promotions and protect breastfeeding. The Milk Code protects children's right to the highest attainable standard of health, nutrition and development, which begins with optimal breastfeeding.

Let me respond to the letter of Dr. Santiago del Rosario, published in the INQUIRER last June 23, which describes so-called "limits" to breastfeeding:

- Virtually all mothers can breastfeed and produce enough milk for their babies. Mothers who are starving, sick, recovering from surgery including caesarean section, those who adopt and those with inverted nipples can breastfeed. An infant with a cleft palate can use a palatal obturator to breastfeed. Newborns do not need a large amount of breast milk. Breast-milk production is primed through a baby's sucking. The more the baby sucks, the more milk will be produced. Thus, a mother can produce enough milk even for multiples or siblings.
- Mothers can breastfeed even while ill. The list of drugs that are not compatible with breastfeeding is now very short. Since breastfeeding protects both mother and child, a doctor should prescribe medicines that are safe with breastfeeding. Exclusive breastfeeding by an HIV-positive mother results in lower risk of transmission than mixed feeding.
- Breast milk can be preserved, so combining breastfeeding and work is possible. In fact, breastfeeding allows working mothers to make up for their absence.
- There is no evidence that breast milk proteins cause allergies. On the contrary, the epidermal growth factor in colostrum and breast milk "seals" the baby's intestines, preventing the absorption of large protein molecules, which cause intolerance and allergies. Allergy in a breastfed infant may be caused not by breast milk but by food that the mother takes in such as cow's milk and other dairy products. In this instance, the mother needs to stop eating the allergen.
- Where direct breastfeeding is not possible, such as in cases of maternal deaths or severe maternal illness, wet-nursing or expressed breast milk is the ideal alternative means of infant feeding. Using a cup, a baby can receive donated breast milk.
- Breast milk is even more important for premature babies. The breast milk of mothers who gave birth to premature babies has more protein and fats that facilitate optimal growth.
- Bottle-fed children can have double the risk of developing posterior cross-bite than breastfed children.
- Non-breastfed children have lower IQ and academic achievement than those who were breastfed. The strong emotional bond with the mother, attained through breastfeeding, instills trust, confidence and enhanced psycho-social development—all necessary for developing independence.

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (Unicef) fully supports the DOH in the more difficult tasks of educating the health industry, private sector and the public on the revised IRR and ensuring its implementation. This can only mean a healthier, more productive population.

—DR. NICHOLAS ALIPUI,
country representative,
Unicef, RCBC Plaza, Makati City

Better way to spend zoo money

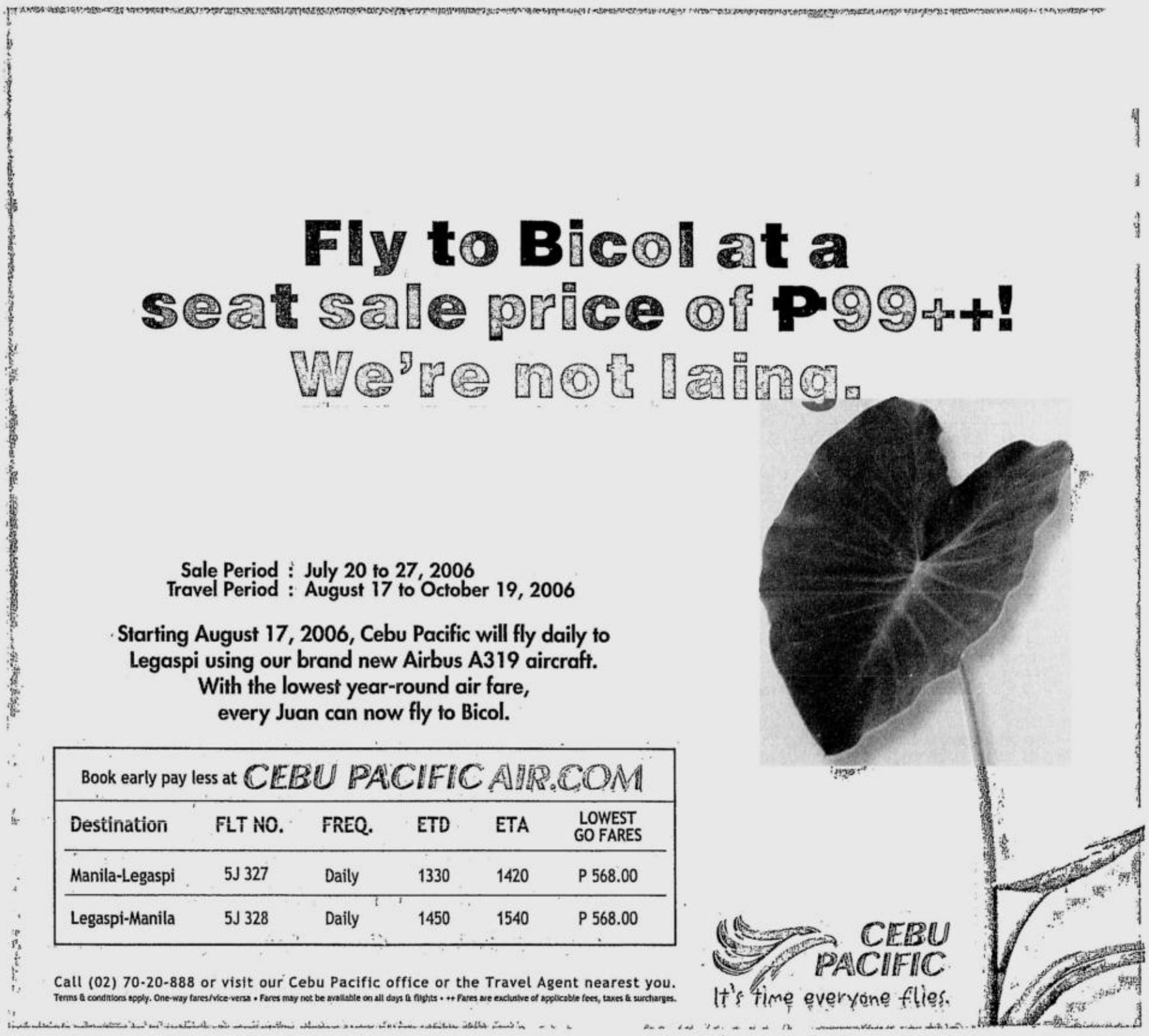
THIS IS A REACTION TO A LETter titled "Role of zoos in animal conservation." (PDI, 7/10/06)

Zoos are about profit, and as such the zoo industry breeds animals based on which species they believe will bring paying customers through the gates: cute babies attract visitors.

Most animals in zoos are not endangered, and captive breeding programs do little to protect wild populations. Returning captive-bred animals to their natural homelands is difficult and costly, and most zoos can't even afford to attempt it. The resulting "surplus" means older animals may be unloaded to roadside zoos, circuses, or exotic animal dealers.

The large sums of money wasted on captive breeding would be more responsibly directed toward non-profit sanctuaries that rescue and care for exotic animals but don't sell or breed them; and to legitimate conservation groups working to reduce the main factors contributing to the decline of the species in the wild. For more information, please visit WildlifePimps.com.

—JASON BAKER,
director,
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals-Asia Pacific,
Philippines@peta.org



No contract signed, no commission given

IN CONRADO BANAL III'S JUNE 8 COLUMN discussing the Masinloc power plant, he alleged: "Four years ago, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile also saw the cozy relationship between Alcordo and Sunny Sun. It was Enrile who exposed Alcordo as Napocor president for giving his business partner Sunny Sun a handsome commission (P350 million) for a supply contract with Napocor."

Let me state that during my term as president of Napocor from February 2001 to January 2002, I did not negotiate and approve any supply contract(s) between Napocor and Sunny Sun's companies. Thus, I find it perplexing that Banal would accuse me of giving a "handsome commission" of P350 million to Sunny Sun.

Also, I am not aware of any statements made by Enrile concerning the alleged supply contract.

I signed ERC Resolution 21, which was issued to obviate a possible legal challenge on an amendment promulgated by the Energy Regulatory Commission. Clearly, it was not issued to "force Meralco to enter into a supply contract with YNN," as Banal alleged.

Moreover, if Banal had only verified the records of the Philippine Stock Exchange and the Securities Exchange Commission, he would have found that my family and I have no shareholdings in Duracom Mobile Power Corp. (DMPC). Similarly, we have no shares in East Asia Power Resources Corp. (EAPRC) or in any of DMPC's or EAPRC's affiliates. In fact, I divested myself of all my EAPRC shareholdings in December 2000, well ahead of my employment with Napocor (2001 to 2002) and appointment as ERC commissioner (2003).

The records of ERC's proceedings will likewise bear out that I have inhibited myself and taken no part in hearings, deliberations and decisions involving DMPC, EAPRC or any of their affiliates.

Finally, my family and I have no interest in the outcome of PSALM's decision on the sale of the Masinloc power plant. At no time have we intervened or influenced PSALM's decision-making on that matter or any other matter.

In the spirit of fair play, considering that Banal did not attempt to get my side, please publish this letter to alleviate the damage to my reputation and the emotional distress he caused me and my family.

—JESUS N. ALCORDO,
commissioner,
Energy Regulatory Commission

Villar has Estradas' votes all sewn up in Senate

By TJ Burgonio

FORMER PRESIDENT JOSEPH ESTRADA, whose impeachment was triggered by Sen. Manny Villar in 2000, will likely deliver the crucial votes to the latter when he seeks the Senate presidency today when the 13th Congress opens its third regular session.

Estrada's wife, Sen. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, and son, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, are among at least 13 senators expected to cast their vote for Villar to pave the way for his takeover of the Senate's top post from Sen. Franklin Drilon.

The change in leadership is anchored on a term-sharing agreement forged by Drilon and Villar in 2004.

"Yes, we will vote for him," Jinggoy Estrada said in a phone interview, confirming that he and his mother had signed a resolution supporting a smooth transition from Drilon to Villar.

The Estradas, however, set one condition for their votes: That Villar would maintain the Senate's independence and avoid aligning himself with Malacañang throughout his year-long term.

"He will remain independent and protect the Senate as an institution. That's our condition," Jinggoy said in the interview. "And he promised to do the same."

Call on Erap

Villar's visit to the former President at his detention resthouse in Tanay, Rizal, last week was seen as crucial to wrangling the support of the Estradas.

But Jinggoy said they had made up their minds long before the visit, and it wasn't a tough decision.

"There's a gentleman agreement between Drilon and Villar and since the opposition will not put up a candidate, we decided to vote for him," he said.

As House Speaker in 2000, Villar played a major role in the quick transmittal of the Articles of Impeachment against then President Estrada to the Senate on charges of corruption, inefficiency and incompetence.

While the impeachment proceedings were aborted, Estrada was eventually ousted in January 2001 by a people power revolt, detained and subsequently charged with plunder. His trial before the Sandiganbayan is nearing conclusion.

Big plus

Senators conceded the votes of the Estradas were a "big plus" for Villar.

"The votes of 12 majority senators were expected, so getting the votes of the Estradas is a big plus," Senate Pro Tempore Juan Flavier said in an interview.

Villar's assumption of the top Senate post appears to be a cinch. Drilon himself said he would immediately nominate Villar upon the opening of the Senate session at 10 a.m. today and predicted his colleague would be elected by acclamation.

In an acclamation vote, the senators skirt formal voting and the outgoing Senate President merely declares he is relinquishing the post to the incoming president based on consensus, according to Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

So far, at least 13 senators have signed the resolution supporting a smooth turnover, the number of votes needed to wrest control of the presidency, according to Villar's camp.

After five years and seven months as Senate President, Drilon is bowing out today amid praise from former President Corazon C. Aquino, colleagues and Liberal Party stalwarts.

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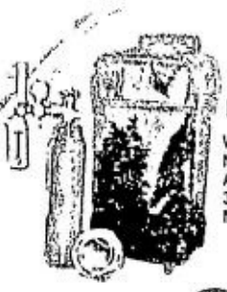

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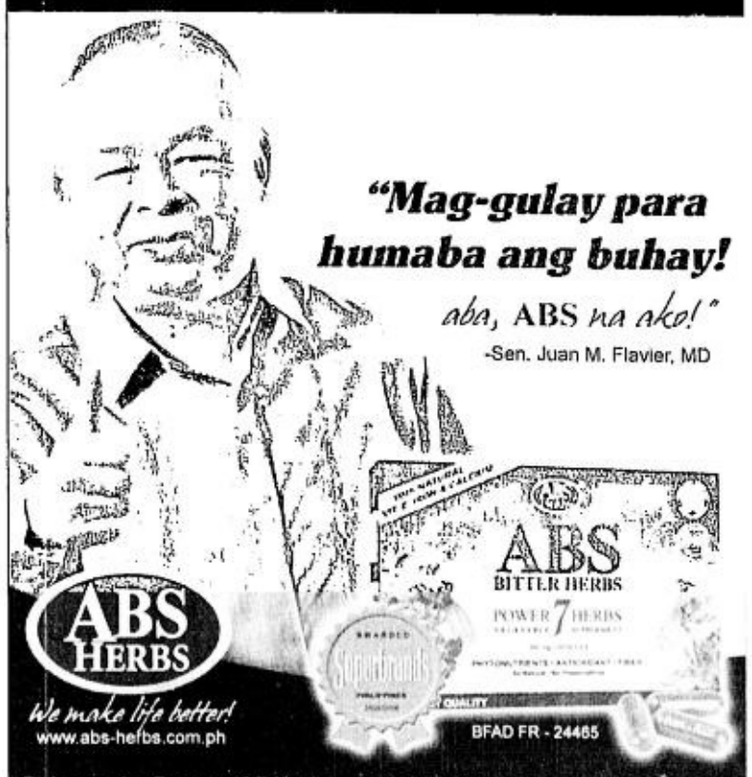

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Public mood to indicate nation's state

From page A1

fore Ms Arroyo delivered her Sona, her administration teetered on the edge of collapse when key Cabinet officials resigned and important political allies deserted her.

Six months ago, she smashed a coup attempt, the most serious in her second term, by mutinous military officers in conspiracy with a wide network of civil society groups opposing her, forcing her to declare a national emergency.

Today, Ms Arroyo has regained control. The coup plotters are on the run and are in disarray, but her grip on power remains precarious. The threats of "people power" uprisings have abated. She crushed an impeachment action last year.

As she addresses Congress, she faces a second set of impeachment complaints in the House of Representatives. The impeachment threat cannot be discounted.

Forceful measures deployed to surmount these challenges have temporarily immobilized her foes, have allowed her to buy time, and gave her space to maneuver. As a result, the country has entered a period of uneasy political truce or stalemate that has allowed a change in the national mood, where neither the regime nor its opponents can claim victory.

Standoff

This standoff has impaired the capacity of the regime to govern effectively and bring about results sought by the Sonas of previous years.

The change in the national mood reveals more about the real state of the nation than what Ms Arroyo will paint in the Sona, which is self-serving official propaganda.

When the President mounts the podium at Congress this afternoon, the foremost questions lurking in the public mind are: First, when will be her next crisis of survival? Second, will she serve out her full term till 2010? And third, what dramatic initiatives will she announce to heed off the next challenge to her tenure?

Though the Sona is a carefully crafted document that has to be taken seriously, the public mood determines political outcomes more than the contents of the message; the fate of the Sona whether it becomes archival material; or whether from today, the administration will be a short-lived or long-term regime.

This is why, I consider it important to pay close attention to the mood of the nation as the President stands on the crossroads of her administration.

Depoliticize Sona

There are advance indications that the President will shift the Sona agenda to economic and developmental concerns away from constitutional change. In a word: depoliticize Sona and purge the agenda for the next few years of the poisonous toxins of endless political confrontations.

Question is, will Ms Arroyo be allowed to shift the agenda from political concerns to economics? How long will this mood of living in a phony political truce last?

Last year, the President was red hot on constitutional change as a formula for fundamental systems change—from presidential to parliamentary system—and for putting the legitimacy issue to an end.

The initiative has hit the dead-end of the mode of change—constituent assembly, constitutional convention or people's initiative. There are no quick fixes out of the crisis in sight in the 2006 Sona. The mood today will dissipate as soon as the balance of forces changes.

A few things clearly define the mood of the nation today. First, there is a standoff. Regime opponents have failed to bring sufficient mass support behind their campaign to depose Ms Arroyo. Second, Ms Arroyo has demonstrated that she is tougher and more ruthless in using power to crush her opponents' schemes than they thought. She has proved she is not a pushover.

No qualms

In declaring a state of national emergency in February, Ms Arroyo signaled that she has no qualms in using extraordinary powers and authoritarian methods to crush her opponents. Her opponents played rough and did not miss any weapon, legal or extra-legal available to them—people power, impeachment, coup plots—in trying to oust her.

In response, Ms Arroyo did not spare any weapon in her armory, and unfortunately, she had the powers of state at her command. Let's have no illusions about the confrontations of the past three years. They have been tests of strength of raw power.

Army Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, the veteran of coup attempts since 1989, has a good grasp of the reality of struggle for power, from which regime opponents and all of us can learn. When hot-headed junior officers were demanding the storming of Malacañang in February, he got angry and told them, "Are you sure you will win?"

Iron hand

Ms Arroyo reestablished her authority with an iron hand, by being ruthless in exercising state powers. Let there be no mistake about this. She will use it again when circumstances are present. This should not be understood as an endorsement of her methods. It is a statement of political reality.

This is why there is temporary calm, a stalemate and uneasy truce. The relaxed public mood merely tranquilizes the public nerves that have been on edge for the past three years. It sets the atmosphere for us to listen to Sona—whether it offers a way out of the legitimacy crisis. This mood will not last.

Last year's Sona revealed the strength of Ms Arroyo's rural constituency that enabled her to overcome the campaign to oust her. Sona 2006 gives us a window into her survival prospects till 2010, more than as an economic and political blueprint for the near future. Today, the mood is the message.

3 'ordinary people' to share Sona limelight

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THREE "ORDINARY PEOPLE" will share the limelight with President Macapagal-Arroyo when she delivers her annual State of the Nation Address at 4 p.m. today.

The three, whose names were not disclosed, will stand alongside boxing hero Manny Pacquiao, international beauty titlist Precious Lara Quigaman and some 30 other Filipino celebrities and politicians whom the President will cite in her speech.

One of the three is a young woman Ms Arroyo recently met during one of her functions and whose words touched the President enough to invite her to be her guest in her most important speech of the year, a Palace official who declined to be named said.

The President, according to the official, is also expected to congratulate Sen. Manuel Villar as the new Senate President. *(See related story on Page A17.)*

Villar is expected to be elected new Senate head this morning to replace Senate President Franklin Drilon who had withdrawn support from Ms Arroyo at the height of the "Hello Garci" electoral fraud scandal in July last year.

Last year's Sona presented an awkward picture of Ms Arroyo with Speaker Jose de Venecia wildly clapping for her and a smug-looking Drilon keeping his hands clasped together.

Villar is seen as being more friendly to Ms Arroyo although his wife, Rep. Cynthia Villar, is with the House minority.

The official said Ms Arroyo will also thank the military for being loyal to her.

A Feb. 24 coup failed after newly retired AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga turned his back on a planned military withdrawal of support from the President.

Economy: Rising prices, few jobs, shallow growth

From page A1

What's the record on prices?

Since 2002, the inflation rate—which measures how fast prices are rising—has progressively moved up from 3.1 percent to 7.2 percent. In other words, prices are now rising more than twice as fast as they did in 2002.

To be sure, world oil prices have had much to do with this trend. However, a cursory look at our neighbors, who have been subject to the same oil price increases (whether or not they produce much of their own oil requirements), indicates that their inflation rates did not move as dramatically as ours.

This implies that certain factors peculiar to our own economy made our prices move up faster. This includes the fact that growth in our agricultural production last year (2 percent) did not even catch up with growth in our population (2.3 percent).

While the inflation rate had eased slightly (i.e. to 6.9 percent) in May and June, the outlook for the rest of the year does not sound encouraging. The recent surge in world oil prices and the continuing uncertainty due to new hostilities in the Middle East, along with the renewed depreciation of the peso, are not helping at all.

With inflation eating away the common earner's purchasing power faster than wages are rising (if at all), the average Filipino is clearly getting worse off.

Elusive jobs

If that is so for those who have wage-paying jobs, things must be far worse for the families of the more than 1 out of every 10 (11.8 percent) Filipino workers who can't even find a job.

And note that even among those who do have a job, more than 1 out of every 10 (12 percent) are actually in the category of "unpaid family workers." These are people I have described before as being in the situation of "all work and no pay."

The jobs record of the Arroyo administration leaves much to be desired. As of the last quarterly labor survey by the National Statistics Office—which is the authoritative source of employment statistics in the country—about 803,000 new jobs had been created in the economy over the immediate past year.

This was already on the high side. A look at the quarterly labor statistics of recent years reveals that annual job creation had gone as low as 87,000 (January 2005) and had consistently been well below the one million needed to catch up with the new workers joining the labor force every year.

We had a much better record in annual job creation in the past, and had hit more than 2 million new jobs in early 2001 when Ms Arroyo had just assumed power.

Unfortunately, things seem to have fallen off after that, and we have yet to regain momentum in creating more durable jobs than those of blue-shirt street sweepers cum walking election posters.

And I have not begun to speak of the quality of jobs being generated lately—of which much more can be said but I don't have the space for here.

Low quality growth

As for incomes, measured by gross national product (GNP) and gross domestic product (GDP), I have been describing our economy's growth as narrow, shallow and hollow, and these adjectives continue to be apt.

Two observations are worth citing.

One, the 2005 GDP growth rate, as revised in May, had actually been lower than originally announced in January this year, barely reaching 5 percent—the slowest in the region.

Two, the fastest-growing sectors in the economy driving the overall growth rate are mostly those that do not employ great numbers nor create that many jobs.

For example, the double-digit growers last year, namely finance and mining, only employed 116,000 and 337,000 workers respectively. But the sector that accounts for over 12 million workers, the agriculture sector, grew the slowest at 2 percent.

Little wonder, then, that we commonly hear the lament how the supposedly good growth in the economy is not felt down below, where it counts the most.

Relevant questions

The relevant questions to ask, then, are as follows: Are Filipinos in general able to meet their basic needs? Do they feel their lives improving? Do they feel secure about their future and that of their children? Do they have a voice and a choice in setting their own families' future?

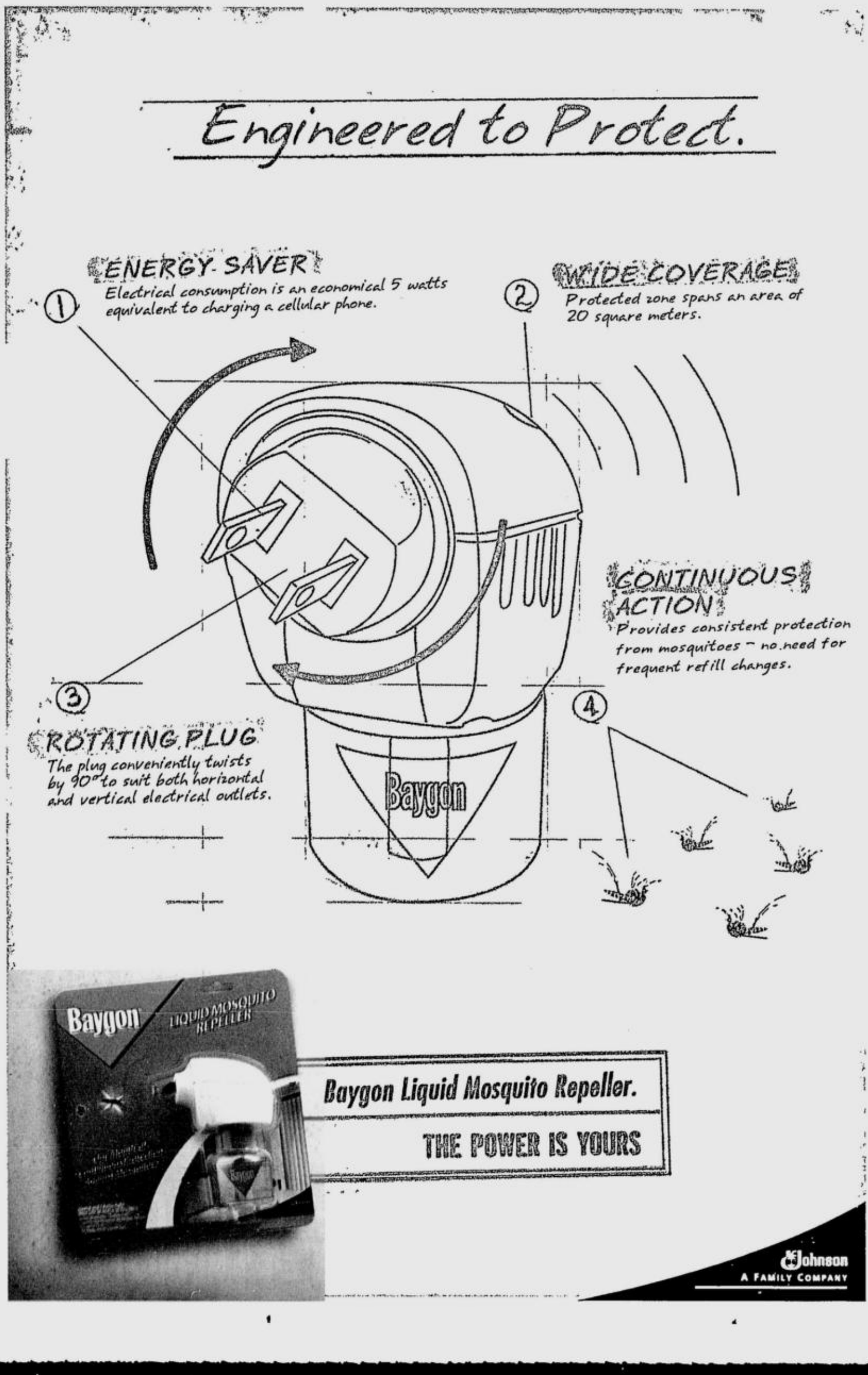
I cannot presume to answer these questions for my fellow Filipinos, but casual indicators abound. Surveys have pointed to high levels of hunger and self-rated poverty.

Official statistics indicate worsening school enrollment and nutrition among children. Private schools and colleges are seeing declining enrollment, and delinquency rates in tuition payment are significantly up—indicating that the middle class has also begun to feel the economic pinch.

We are losing doctors, nurses and teachers by the thousands to other countries, putting in great peril our people's general state of health and education.

What is the true state of the nation, then? Be worried. Be very worried.

The writer is a former economic planning secretary.



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CBCP head unruffled by charges of involvement in coup plot

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—JARO ARCHBISHOP Angel Lagdameo remains unruffled by allegations linking him and five other Catholic bishops to a plot to overthrow President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"I feel relaxed because I know that this may be only part of our groaning, part of our trials," Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), told the INQUIRER.

Richard Garcia and Demosthenes Riva, who earlier volunteered to testify on the illegal numbers game "jueteng" but later became administration witnesses, had claimed that six Church leaders, including Lagdameo, were involved in the plot against the administration.

The witnesses said the others are Archbishop Oscar Cruz and Bishops Julio Xavier Labayen, Deogracias Iñiguez, Antonio Tobias and Teodoro Bacani.

Lagdameo and the other prelates have denied the allegations.

"I do not know (the jueteng witnesses). I forgive them and I hope that they will realize what they have done. I have already forgiven them in my heart," he said.

Lagdameo in an earlier a statement said that the allegations against the six bishops could have been due to their stand on issues "which are not pleasant to certain groups."

He said the bishops "always promote peaceful, nonviolent and constitutional means of reform in government."

If any of the bishops spoke critically of anyone, it was for the "common welfare," Lagdameo said in his statement.

But Lagdameo said he felt "sad" that stories on allegations linking him and the other bishops to the plot were being "fabricated without proof of their veracity."

He thanked the bishops of major Christian denominations who have condemned the allegations against the six Catholic bishops.

"I am grateful for their friendship and also for their spirit of solidarity," he said.

The Ecumenical Bishops Forum, a fellowship of bishops belonging to the Catholic Church, the Episcopal and United Methodist churches, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and the Philippine Independent Church, earlier described the allegations against the six bishops as "harassment" waged by the administration to silence the President's critics.

But Lagdameo said the people should hear what the President has to say in her State of the Nation Address today. "Let us listen because the President will be talking," he said.

MEMBERS of the PNP Special Action Force alight from a truck at the Batasan complex to beef up security for the President's State of the Nation Address today. RAFFY LERMA

GMA in triumphal mood for Sona

From page A1

hump, in terms of security threats," said the source, referring to reports of plots to oust her. "For the first time, she will be showing off her doctorate in economics."

For the 59-year-old President, the past year could very well be the equivalent of the 1990 *annus horribilis* (year of disaster or misfortune) of Margaret Thatcher, the British "Iron Lady"" to whom Ms Arroyo has been likened.

The past year has been marked by skyrocketing world oil prices. The fallout from the "Hello Garci" wiretapping scandal that allegedly showed Ms Arroyo manipulated the 2004 presidential election hounded her. A "cabal" of leftist and rightist conspirators allegedly mounted, but failed, to remove her.

Reconciliation unlikely

"It would be unlikely that there would be great optimism for reconciliation with the political opposition," said Rep. Antonio V. Cuenco of Cebu. "But certainly, there are strong indicators that unmistakably point out that it will be more possible for the administration to be able to get major policies approved this year."

Cuenco said he expected the President's address to "stress the importance of staying focused on our developmental efforts and not being held hostage or glued to political mudslinging, bickerings and other forms of obstructionist and destructive politics."

The centerpiece of the President's vision is the development of four "super regions"—an agricultural belt that will cover northern and central Luzon and northern Mindanao, a tourist area in the Visayas, the industrial heartland stretching from Clark and Subic down to Metro Manila and Batangas, and a "cyber corridor" that would include major cities from Baguio to Davao.

Inputs to the speech include a proposal to distribute 4 million hectares of public lands, especially uplands, to the rural poor, said one source. He added that this was one of the proposals of the National Economic and Development Authority to alleviate poverty.

The source said spending required for the development initiatives would come from the efficient implementation of the Reformed Value-Added Tax law, the collection of "sin taxes" and the anticipated increase in remittances of overseas Filipino workers, among other things.

Buoyed by recent surveys

Aides said the President's confidence was buoyed by recent surveys showing an improvement in her popularity rating—no matter how slight.

One poll by the respected Social Weather Stations was particularly telling, prompting her to redouble her efforts to improve the gains she had scored on the economic front, particularly the bitter VAT pill that Filipinos have had to swallow to address the chronic budget deficit.

SWS said in a first quarter survey that 51 percent of Filipinos agreed to the statement: "Whatever happened in the (2004) elections is over and it is time to move on and let the President focus on the real problems of the nation."

The mid-term balloting next year would be a referendum on the issue of legitimacy, said another source.

In her address, the President will spell out plans to expand spending on health, education and infrastructure, build alliances to promote foreign investments in the country, and protect the OFWs.

OFW remittances

OFW remittances rose by 25 percent last year to $10.7 billion, equivalent to around half the national budget for the year. Inflows this year so far have reached $4.9 billion, up by 14.8 percent, according to Neda.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo L. Neri said that the remittances were raising the country's savings rate—from 23 percent in 2000 to 30 percent in 2005.

"This is due in large part to the changing profile of the migrant workers, as more professionals are being deployed," he said in a statement over the weekend. More nurses and caregivers are in Europe, the Americas and Asia.

The President will stress that the nation is stable, that she is making headway in her campaigns against corruption, lawlessness and terrorism while at the same time upholding constitutionally guaranteed liberties.

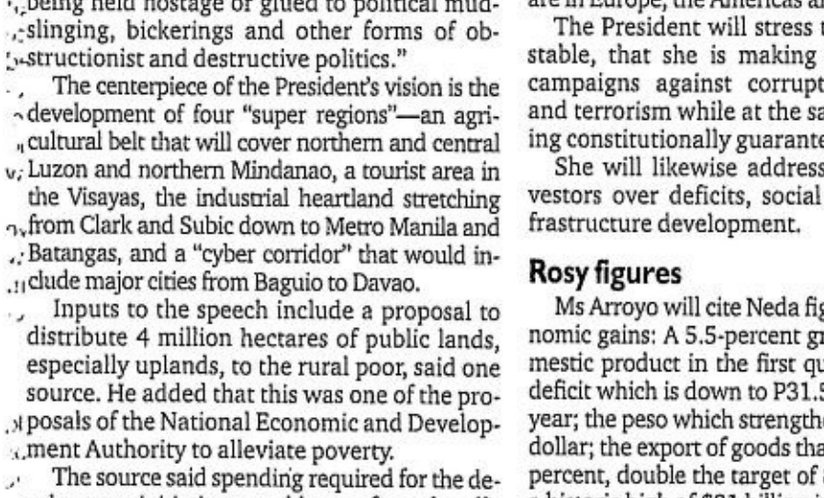
She will likewise address concerns by investors over deficits, social services and infrastructure development.

Rosy figures

Ms Arroyo will cite Neda figures to show economic gains: A 5.5-percent growth in gross domestic product in the first quarter; the budget deficit which is down to P31.5 billion so far this year; the peso which strengthened to P53 to the dollar; the export of goods that has grown by 16 percent, double the target of 8 percent growth; a historic high of $21 billion in foreign currency reserves; $497 million in mining investments as of March, and a 28.1 percent increase in the programmed budget for infrastructure.

The speech also will cover her continuing efforts to reduce poverty—to 24 percent of families as of 2003 from 28.1-percent in 1997. This needs a sustained GDP growth of 7 percent every year to accelerate the drop.

On things that remain to be done, the Neda outlined continued fiscal and financial reforms, reforms in the banking system to increase credit for capital investment, development of agribusiness, credit mobilization for livelihood projects, energy independence and competitive power rates.



A POLICEMAN inspects a congressman's car as it enters the Batasang Pambansa complex. Security was tightened at the legislative building for today's State of the Nation Address by President Macapagal-Arroyo. RAFFY LERMA

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300 families displaced by tribal war

COTABATO CITY—AT LEAST 300 FAMILIES FLED their villages in Maguindanao following clashes between Tausug and Maguindanao gunmen over a land dispute.

North Upi Mayor Ramon Piang said the fighting broke out last week as the two tribal groups laid claims over at least four fishing villages.

The military has confirmed the report but said no casualty figure was immediately available.

Col. Julieto Ando, chief of the Army's 6th Infantry Battalion, said soldiers had also been sent to the villages of Lapaken, Bakayawan, Resa and Kinimi in the newly created Datu Blah Sinsuat town, which is near North Upi, to pacify the tribes.

The villages were part of North Upi before the creation of Datu Blah Sinsuat.

Social workers have been mobilized to help residents of the affected villages who have sought refuge in his town, said Piang.

Soldiers were also helping the local government assist the displaced residents, Ando said.

The recent clashes are offshoots of a decades-old animosity between the two Moro tribes, Piang said.

The feud was rekindled when the affected villages became part of Datu Blah on July 4, he said.

"They had long been feuding. Now the feud is alive again," Piang said.

The Tausug, natives of Sulu and Tawi-tawi, have settled in the fishing villages for at least 40 years now.

Ando said the presence of a beefed-up contingent of Army troops would deter further clashes between the two groups as negotiations were being prepared to end the feud.

In Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat, authorities have prevented the escalation of violence between Muslim residents and Christian settlers, according to Mayor Labualas Mamansual.

The violence in Barangay Badjangon started on July 13 when Christian members of the local militia group shot and killed a Badjangon village official, according to Mamansual.

"Muslim villagers launched a retaliatory attack on July 15 on a Christian neighborhood in Barangay Baranayan," Mamansual said.

He said that late last week, he and ranking provincial police officials went to the area and talked with the villagers.

Mamansual said two militiamen involved in the July 13 killing were arrested while the leader of the group that attacked the Christian neighborhood had also yielded.

"We need to act swiftly to prevent the conflict from transforming into a full-blown feud," he said.

Mamansual said that to prevent the feud, they should show the family and relatives of the victims that the justice system was working.

Feud only occurs when law and justice in the community breaks down. ***Charlie C. Señase and Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Aeta leader latest fatality in attacks on leftists

NIÑO JESUS Y. ORBETA/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

CHECKING FOR CHANGES
Employees of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology collect ashes scattered by Mayon volcano to determine any changes in their composition.

By Ansbert Joaquin and Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SUBIC, ZAMBALES—AN AETA LEADER, who used to be the provincial coordinator of the party-list group Anakpawis in Zambales, was shot dead by three men on Saturday, raising the death toll on leftist activists in Central Luzon to 82 since 2005, reports gathered by the INQUIRER showed.

Charlie Daylo, 38, an Aeta chieftain in San Felipe town, was gunned down in a resort owned by his in-laws in Barangay Calapandayan here at 1 p.m., according to town police chief Supt. Cesar Jacob.

Three men aboard a white Mitsubishi L-300 van entered the resort, walked toward Daylo, shot him at close range and then drove out to the national highway.

Two witnesses reported seeing the faces of two of the three suspects, Jacob said. They were not wearing bonnets or ski masks to conceal their identities.

An INQUIRER source said at least four other persons were involved in the attack, some of them armed with M-16 rifles. The other men were in a jeepney and on a motorcycle, the source said.

In a phone interview, Daylo's wife Ira said her husband apparently knew the killers.

She said her father, who was with Daylo at the time of the attack, told her that when Daylo saw the gunmen, he said, *"Bakit hanggang dito ay sinundan ninyo ako* (Why are you following me)?"

Ira's father said Daylo begged for his life and shouted, *"Huwag po, huwag po* (Don't, don't)," and started running to avoid his attackers. The gunmen then shot him several times.

Daylo died from 11 bullet wounds.

Ira suspected the military to be behind the attack. She said Daylo had once confided to her that soldiers were out to kill him.

She said Daylo was supposed to go to San Felipe town to tend their rice farm on Saturday but she advised him not to leave for security reasons.

Citing police intelligence reports, Jacob said Daylo had been "listed as a New People's Army rebel."

Zambales police director Senior Supt. Arrazad Subong said Daylo went by the alias "Ka Jobet."

In 1998, the military's Northern Luzon Command released a report identifying the Aeta leader as an NPA commander.

Daylo met the INQUIRER then to refute Nolcom's claims. He used to chair the Central Luzon Aeta Association until he was elected head of the tribal council, also in 1998.

Daylo was vice chair of the Zambales chapter of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples at the time of his death.

Roman Polintan, chair of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan in Central Luzon, said Daylo had not been active in his Anakpawis work due to threats to his life.

The killing followed the slaying of Arnel Guevarra, an Anakpawis supporter, on Friday night in Mexico, Pampanga.

On Thursday, labor leader Lowie Sangalang was arrested by soldiers in the City of San Fernando in Pampanga, while four activists were abducted in Lupao, Nueva Ecija.

The incidents took place as the military entered the second month of its intensified anti-insurgency campaign in Central Luzon.

Transport sector leader Emerlito Lipio has remained missing since he was arrested by soldiers and policemen in Angeles City on July 3. Two University of the Philippines students and a farmer in Bulacan have not been seen since they were allegedly seized by soldiers in Hagonoy, Bulacan, on June 26.

In Casiguran, Sorsogon, police could not yet identify suspects in the killing of Danilo Hagosojos, a leader of the Samahan ng mga Ex-detainees Laban sa Detensyon at Amnestiya (Selda).

Casiguran Mayor Edwin Hamor said they would start checking people riding in tandem on motorcycles as part of measures to prevent similar incidents from happening. *With a report from Bobby Q. Labalan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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DENR exec gets threats from illegal logging ring

LUCENA CITY—WITH THE GOVernment's intense campaign against illegal logging operations in northern Quezon, the local head of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has been receiving threatening text messages from suspected members of an illegal logging syndicate.

"Several text messages that I received said *'mag-ingat ka* Cenro, *malapit na ang araw mo*.' Sometimes, I would text back the sender saying, 'there is nothing personal. I'm just doing my job,'" Antonio Diwa, the community environment and natural resources officer, told the INQUIRER over the phone.

Diwa claimed he just ignored the warning.

"Most probably, the threat came from illegal loggers and those others that were making money out of raping the forest," he said.

But Diwa said he now observed extra precautionary measures, especially during field monitoring and conduct of anti-illegal logging operations.

"But threats or not, we will continue our campaign against illegal loggers," he said.

Last week, DENR and military men intercepted three 10-wheeler trucks containing about 55,000 board feet of assorted lumber and flitches worth about P1.4 million in Real, Infanta and General Nakar.

"The truck drivers and their owners will be facing charges," Diwa said.

The DENR has also been conducting information and education campaign in different Sierra Madre villages to ask the cooperation of mountain people in the war against illegal logging, he said.

"The effort is now beginning to bear fruit. Most of the mountain settlers now serve as our eyes and ears against illegal loggers," Diwa said.

He said they discovered that some small-time illegal loggers had been trying to pass off newly cut trees as "drifted logs."

"We've been explaining to all mountain stakeholders that the gathering of drifted logs has already been stopped by the government. It's now illegal to gather drifted logs and we've already stopped issuing permits," he stressed.

According to Dumagat natives, lots of drifted logs are still scattered in the upper tributaries of the Agos River in the bosom of the Sierra Madre mountain ranges, which, they said, pose a serious threat to lowland communities.

Last year, former DENR Secretary Michael Defensor issued a memorandum allowing the retrieval and movement of logs and wood products in Quezon and Aurora as part of the government's disaster preparedness program. The permit expired on Jan. 14. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Couple nabbed for illegal recruitment in Mindanao

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—POlice on Thursday arrested a couple facing a string of illegal recruitment cases in Metro Manila, Cagayan De Oro City, North Cotabato and Davao City.

Chief Supt. German Doria, Central Mindanao police chief, told reporters that he ordered the Regional Intelligence and Investigation Division (RIID) to conduct surveillance operations after receiving information that the suspects were hiding here.

The hunt started when two of the couple's alleged victims, Marly Roquero of Balugo village, Pigcawayan town, and Annabelle Mandahay of Barangay Poblacion, Matalam town, all in North Cotabato, sought the help of authorities against Joel and Ellen Cailing, Sandee Ann Astillero and Dario Dar.

The two said they were recruited for jobs in South Korea sometime in 2003, but after paying the corresponding placement fees, the four suspects disappeared.

Roquero and Mandahay filed charges against them.

When the two victims received information that Joel Cailing was seen in Lagao village here, they sought police assistance.

RIID chief Senior Supt. Willie Dangane said they managed to get copies of other arrest warrants issued by two courts in Southern and Northern Mindanao against the suspects.

Cailing was arrested while driving a tricycle in Lagao at around 6:30 p.m. Thursday. His wife Ellen was arrested later.

Doria said that based on additional information they gathered, the couple had managed to dupe about 300 people seeking work in South Korea since 2002.

The suspects, he said, had collected placement fees, ranging from P10,000 to P30,000, from each of the applicants.

Doria said the couple worked for Dar, who runs an illegal recruitment agency.

Ellen said her husband, a public school teacher for 12 years in Cagayan De Oro City, was not involved in the activity contrary to the allegations of the victims.

She said she only forged her husband's signature.

Ellen said it was Dar who really benefited from the scheme.

"From every placement fee collected from each applicant, I only got P500 as share," she said.

Doria said the suspects would be turned over to the courts hearing the charges against them.

A manhunt was also launched against Dar, said to be a scion of a political family in North Cotabato. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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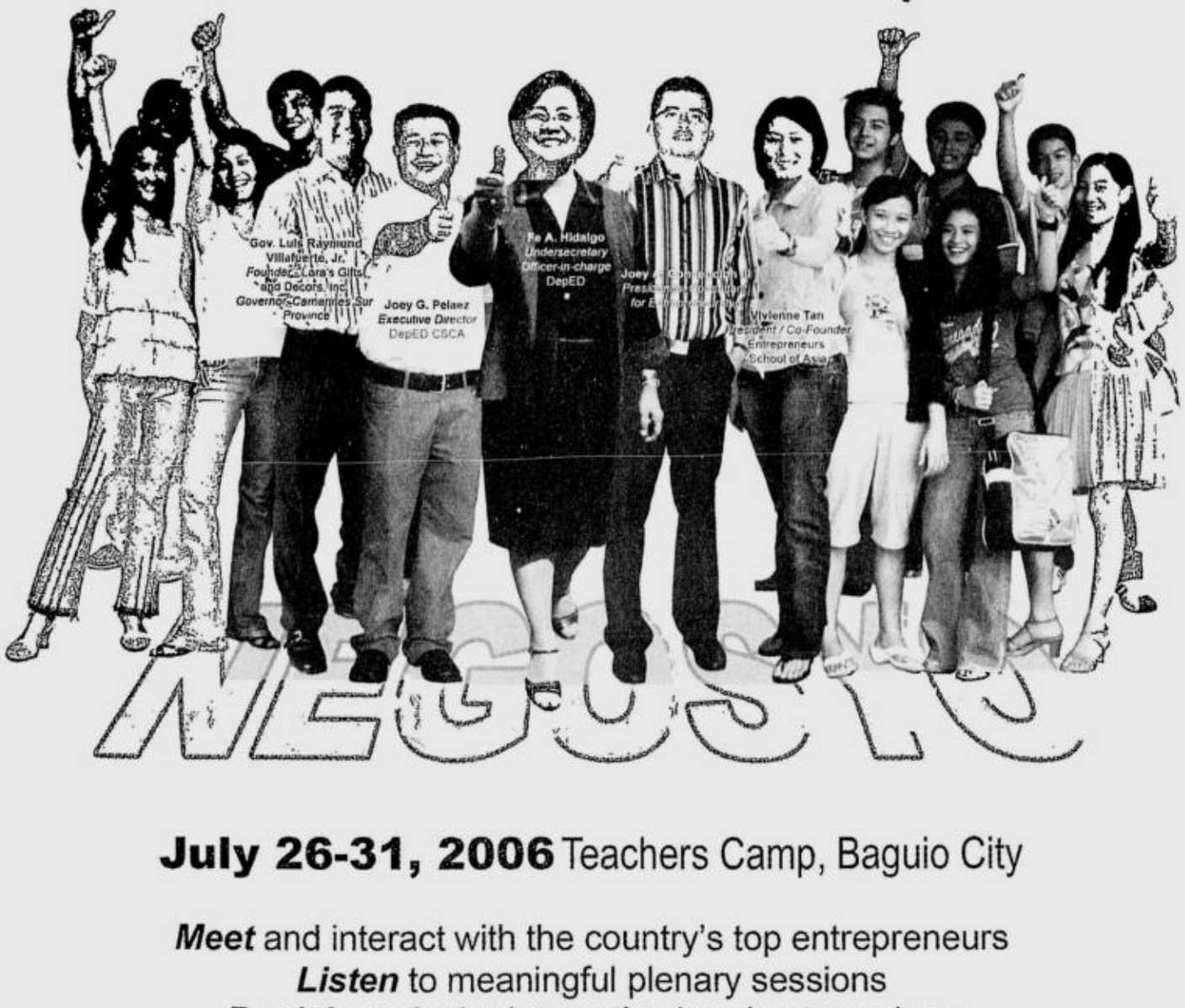

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Leave landslide-prone areas, Negros folk urged

By Romy G. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—THE TOP government geologist here has recommended the relocation of residents living in a mountain slope in three towns and a city of Negros Oriental that were found to have wide fissures and prone to landslides and mudslides.

Editha A. Amiscaray, supervising science research specialist of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (Penro) here, said the fissures were found in Sitio Catipon, Barangay Bonawon, Siaton; Sitios San Agustin and Bagayasan, Barangay San Miguel, Bayawan; Sitio Maquin, Barangay Sta. Cruz Viejo, Tanjay City; and Sitio Nabinlan, Barangay Pinucaun, Vallahermoso.

She said the cracks could have been caused by an earthquake, constant rain and earth movement.

Amiscaray, who studied the possible geohazard areas in the province with other Penro personnel and local government representatives since April, said in her report Friday that the fissure in Sitio Catipon was "more than one kilometer in length with an average width of one and one-half meters."

She recommended the immediate relocation of residents of Sitio Catipon and its nearby areas because "the danger of a landslide is very imminent particularly during rainy season."

"The ground and the underlying rocks will be saturated with water. In addition to the crack, the weight of the water and the fragility of the rocks make the area vulnerable to slope failure or landslide. The residents at the base of the slope particularly those living downstream of the river at the foot of the affected mountain should be transferred to safe location," she added.

Amiscaray did not, however, say how many families could be affected in case of a landslide except to say that "there are many."

Quoting the residents, Amiscaray said the crack was formed following an earthquake sometime in October 2003.

Amiscaray recommended that residents of other areas near cracked slopes to stay vigilant and immediately leave their houses should there be sustained heavy downpour.

She said her office had already given copies of her report to the mayors of the concerned localities for immediate action.

In the case of sitios San Miguel and Bagayasan, Amiscaray reported finding several fissures with "terrace-like structure" that were "few meters in length" and about a meter wide.

She said the cracks could grow bigger because of the rainwater that would penetrate into it and dissolve the underlying limestone.

"In the future... the limestone becomes fragmented and fragile due to the invasion of water and other solution in the interstices of the formation. When there is earth movement... these fragmented rocks may give in to the pull of gravity, thus the slope failure or landslide occurs," she warned.

In Sitio Maquiña, Amiscaray's team discovered two fissures. The first was about 10 meters long, two meters deep and one-half meter wide. The other was approximately 10 meters wide, three meters deep and one-half meter wide.

Amiscaray said residents had told her team that the cracks have been there for almost 15 years. But she warned that "there is a chance that the cracks may progress into more complicated structures" and "rainwater will penetrate the cracks and may further dissolve the underlying limestone."

The team also found some cracks in Sitio Nabinlan, Barangay Pinucauan, which already experienced a landslide seven years ago.

Amiscaray said that although it appeared that the Nabinlan area has seemingly stabilized, there was still a danger of landslide when there is constant heavy rains or earth movement.

Pangasinan LGUs, fisherfolk sign pact to save Lingayen Gulf

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LABRADOR, PANGASINAN—EFforts to revive the environmentally critical Lingayen Gulf got another boost on Friday when local officials, fishermen and representatives of a nongovernment organization signed an agreement to sustain the management of the gulf's coastal resources in various towns in Pangasinan.

The agreement was signed by Gov. Victor Agbayani, Mayors Nestor Pulido (Anda), Alfonso Celeste (Bolinao), Gabriel Navarro (Bani) and Hernani Braganza (Alaminos City) and Edna Aguilar, deputy manager of the Sagip Lingayen Gulf project, and local fishermen.

The pact, they said, was meant to leave a "living gulf" to "all generations after us."

Netherlands support

The Sagip Lingayen Gulf Project is supported by The Netherlands government and is being implemented by the University of the Philippines' Marine Environment and Resources Foundation Inc. (MERF) from December 2002 to November 2007.

Under the agreement, however, the provincial government and the local governments of the four coastal towns and the MERF will harmonize their programs, projects and efforts and pool their resources for sustainable coastal resources management.

Agbayani said programs to revive a critical body of water like the Lingayen Gulf "takes time to develop." He said that after years of planning and implementing projects, "there's still much to be done and implemented."

Several projects have been completed through the partnership of government, nongovernment and the people's organizations such as establishing fish sanctuaries, replanting mangrove areas and minimizing illegal fishing.

Environmentally critical

The Lingayen Gulf was declared environmentally critical in 1994 by former President Fidel Ramos who formed the Lingayen Gulf Coastal Resource Management Commission.

The commission was abolished by President Macapagal-Arroyo, citing overlapping of functions by agencies in charge of protecting bodies of water.

Agbayani said he was happy that the mayors of the coastal towns had committed themselves to conserve the gulf's resources. But he said he hoped that more coastal towns would be included in the Sagip Lingayen Gulf project.

"We hope to duplicate the programs in the 10 other coastal towns," he said.

Pulido said his town was supporting the project because they knew the importance of water to the residents of Anda, the only island town in the province.

William Raboy, a representative of the fishermen, said fishermen in the four coastal towns welcomed being part of the efforts to revive the Lingayen Gulf.

EARTHQUAKE DRILL RAY B. ZAMBRANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
Pupils at the Dagupan City's West Central School get out of their classrooms during the simultaneous earthquake drill Friday. The drill is part of the week-long disaster preparedness exercises in the city.

ROUNDUP

Reward for info on killer

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Mayor Pidi Barzaga of Dasmariñas, Cavite on Thursday offered a P100,000-reward to anyone who could provide information leading to the arrest of the killers of Barangay Victoria Reyes Councilor Marvic Pureza on Wednesday. Dasmariñas police chief Supt. Mario Reyes said Pureza, Barzaga's political supporter, was on her way to the house of the chief of the barangay justice committee in Victoria Reyes when at least three armed persons waylaid her. The victim died from at least two bullet wounds in the head. The killers fled on a tricycle. Reyes lamented the lack of witnesses. "While the crime happened in a residential area, the residents said they saw nothing."
Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Bomb scare in Lipa

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Classes were suspended at the Lipa National High School in Lipa City on Thursday after an unidentified caller told school officials that a bomb had been planted in one of the school buildings and would explode shortly. City police chief Senior Supt. David Quimio said the Explosives and Ordnance Division of the Lipa police started to check the report. Last month, nine persons were severely wounded when a grenade exploded at the Lipa public market. A few days after, phoned-in bomb threats prompted the police to advise Mayor Vilma Santos-Recto to skip the city's annual foundation day rites. In April, Lipa City Public College officials got a phone call that a bomb would explode during the graduation ceremonies.
Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

2 arrested at checkpoint

LUCENA CITY—Police and military forces arrested two armed men in Lucban, Quezon on Wednesday. Quezon police chief Senior Supt. Victorio Caragan Jr. said Arnel Palesa, 37, a native of Pasacao, Camarines Sur, and Rico Boncolmo, 33, of Pamplona, Camarines Sur, who allegedly belong to a kidnap-for-ransom gang based in Bicol, engaged the government troops in a gunfight at a checkpoint that they had set up in Barangay Tiawe. Three other suspects escaped in different directions.
Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

2 bodies retrieved

COTABATO CITY—Police in Parang and Matanog towns in Maguindanao retrieved two bodies that bore stab wounds on Tuesday. Parang police investigator SPO4 Usop Karuotan said the bodies were brought to a funeral parlor in Parang awaiting claimants. The body of a certain "Babes" was found dumped on a vacant lot in Barangay Pinantao in Parang, while the other, identified only as Gissel, was found on the roadside of Km 41 in Matanog.
Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Wrong notions

ILLUSTRATIONS BY L.A. MISTADEG

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—A Muslim leader has noted that due to wrong media projection, the Abu Sayyaf is more known and Muslims are being generalized as such. Saidi Zapanta, a Moro National Liberation Front leader, explained to participants of a recent workshop for peace here the many misconceptions about them. "The Muslim is a follower of Islam and its Koran (like the Christian's bible) is for peace. Even the ways of the Abu Sayyaf are not acceptable to most Muslims," Zapanta said. The term Moro refers to the identity of a group that pursues self-determination or "one nation," thus it is called Bangsa Moro, he clarified. Zapanta added that the Muslims come from three big tribes which were Islamized in the 16th century—Maguindanao, Tausug and Maranaw.
Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Water project nod

SAUDI AMPATUAN, Maguindanao—A ranking leader of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Maguindanao has finally agreed to a US-funded project that taps a spring water source inside his property here. Mayor Saudi Ampatuan Jr. said a piped-in distribution system could now be developed in the area. "Ustadz Wahid Tundok has given his nod as a gesture of peace and nonsupport and involvement to terror movements here," Ampatuan said. Tundok is commander of the MILF's 105th Infantry Brigade. Earlier, Tundok has opposed the project, which was built by the local government in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development.
Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Protect Visayan Sea, 2 lawyers tell Iloilo board

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—TWO LAWYERS HAVE asked the provincial board to support efforts to protect the Visayan Sea and the campaign to declare it a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) World Heritage Site for marine biodiversity.

Lawyers Antonio Oposa Jr. and Hector Teodosio gave a talk during the July 11 session of the provincial board on the importance of conserving the Visayan Sea, which is said to be one of the richest marine eco-regions in the world.

Oposa is the national team leader of the Visayan Sea Squadron, tasked to prevent further destruction and overfishing in about a million-hectare Visayan Sea that laps the shores of Iloilo, Cebu, Negros Occidental and Masbate provinces. Teodosio, who hails from Carles town, promotes fish conservation in northern Iloilo and supports Oposa.

Once dubbed the "Alaska of the Philippines," the Visayan Sea is rich in marine biodiversity, said Oposa. It is located at the heart of the Sulu-Sulawesi Marine Triangle in Central Philippines. Its marine life is more abundant than the entire Caribbean Sea and its fish yield is enough to feed the Philippines all year round, he said.

The global importance of the Visayan Sea, he said, should merit a declaration as an International Marine Park.

Oposa added that lobbying for it is difficult and may take years but not an impossible task.

But the Visayan Sea is far from being a showcase of healthy marine life. More than a thousand small and commercial fishing vessels trawled the Visayan Sea, many of them with fishing gears that spare no small fishes. Near shore have fishers who blast the corals and squirt cyanide to catch coral and aquarium fishes, he added.

Oposa said years of destruction has reduced the Visayan Sea coral reefs to rubble with the exception of some areas where the locals protect them.

The effects of destroying the coral reefs was felt in Carles whose municipal waters, 15 km off shore, joined the Visayan Sea. A survey conducted by the Visayan Sea Squadron volunteer-divers in May noted that the corals off the coastal villages of Carles are so degraded that there was an absence of reef fishes like grouper, butterfly and parrot fish, except in one or two areas where locals were vigilant in guarding their waters.

Oposa said the survey result was compared with the condition of corals off Jilatagaan and Hilutungan in Cebu, which were declared marine protected areas. In the two areas, reef fishes abound. The result of the survey is an argument for the establishment of marine protected areas or sanctuaries, said Oposa.

Under the Fisheries Code (Republic Act No. 8550), each municipality shall identify 15 percent of its total coastal area as fish refuge or sanctuaries.

Through a network of fish sanctuaries or marine protected areas, the Visayan Sea can be rehabilitated, he said.

The members of the provincial board said they would consider Oposa's proposals when they hold consultations on fisheries protection in Northern Iloilo.

Century-old cannon on Lubang Island missing

CITY OF CALAPAN—ONE OF THE TWO century-old cannons on Lubang Island in Occidental Mindoro is missing, Mayor Policarpio Tesorio told the INQUIRER.

Tesorio identified those behind the theft as Ivan Vergara and Blanz Villarosa, who he claimed, tried to move out the cannon in an L300 van on July 20.

The INQUIRER tried to contact Vergara and Villarosa for their comments but could not locate them.

Tesorio said the cannon was taken from the historic Fort Santa Catalina in Barangay Maligaya (formerly Barangay Bonbon).

"I [already] coordinated with the Coast Guard, Philippine Ports Authority and the captain of the ship MV Conchita and requested them not to entertain the shipment," said Tesorio.

Shipping out an artifact without the required documents is against the law, he said.

Tesorio said he saw the cannon when the van was forcibly opened. He described it to be measuring almost 2 meters long and weighing about 3 tons.

"The van suddenly sped away and until now, we cannot locate it or the canon," Tesorio said.

He said the local judge had issued a search warrant for the recovery of the artifact.

Insp. Marlon Cabataña said investigators had coordinated with the municipality of Looc, the Coast Guard and concerned authorities at all possible exits, including the airport, and requested strict inspection of vehicles and cargoes. *Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

3 get life term for killing of public school principal

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—THREE PERsons were sentenced Friday to serve life in prison for the kidnap-slay of a public school principal in 2004.

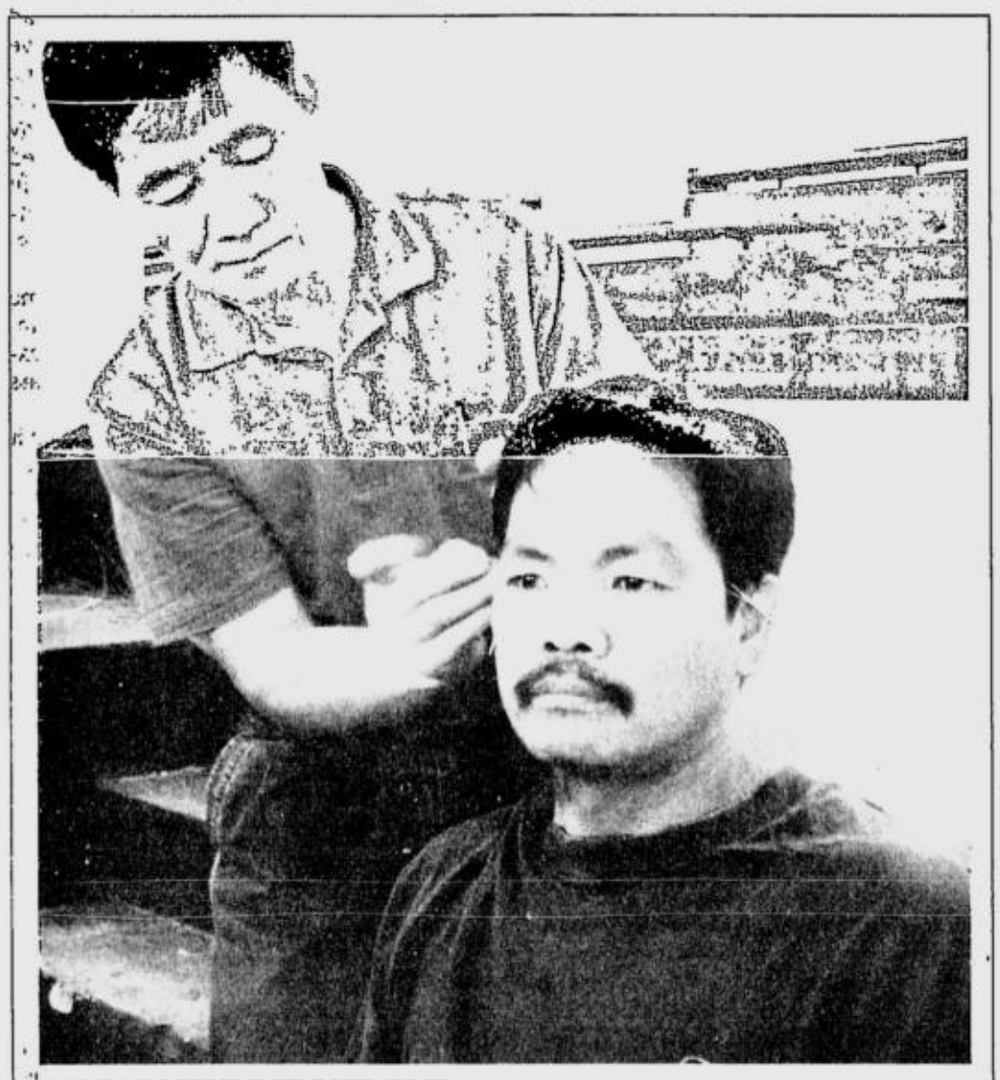
Bacolod Regional Trial Court Judge Roberto Chiongson found Eugene Canales Villanueva, Edilberto Harder Norada and Agustin Lacbanes Seva guilty beyond reasonable doubt as conspirators and principals in the kidnapping with murder of Reggie Nojas Pacil, 42, the principal of the Alijis Elementary School in Valladolid town.

Chiongson also ordered the three to pay the heirs of Pacil P1.95 million in compensatory damages, P50,000 as death indemnity and P50,000 as moral damages.

Court records showed that on Feb. 11, 2004, the three detained Pacil at the Taculing Court Apartelle for the purpose of extorting ransom but when it did not materialize, they killed him and dumped his body at Villa Angela Subdivision in Bacolod City.

Norada had admitted in court that he and his co-accused wanted to kidnap a friend of Pacil, Canadian national Ray Track using Pacil as the lure. But when the Canadian did not show up, they decided to detain Pacil and later kill the school principal.

Sick people go to 'risen' boy in Albay for healing



ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENT LEONCIO BALBIN, JR./PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
A member of a Korean team inserts acupuncture needles in a patient's head during a medical mission in Candon City in Ilocos Sur.

LEGAZPI CITY—AFTER NEWS OF A 10-year-old boy who "has risen back to life" came out, some people have started seeking healing from him.

Dante "Jun-Jun" Cardel Jr. was reportedly declared dead due to a brain tumor on June 21 at the Philippine General Hospital but he surprisingly came to life 12 hours later, while he was being transported back here from Manila.

Dr. Michael Tee, assistant to the director for public affairs of the PGH, clarified that the doctors had recommended that Jun-Jun undergo radiotherapy and consult an oncologist, and not to undergo operation as earlier reported, to decompress his tumor.

"The patient was given the necessary emergency treatment. But upon the recommendation of our neurosurgeon, the tumor was deemed inoperable. They (family) were advised that the boy undergo radiotherapy, but the family requested that he be allowed to go home instead, which the PGH respected," Tee said.

When the INQUIRER first visited the Cardel residence in Barangay Puro on July 18, Fortunato Moneda, 42, Jun-Jun's grandfather who had been suffering from arthritis for a year, revealed that his grandson had healed his sickness.

A truck driver, Moneda said, he used to feel pain in his feet every time he ate mung beans, which triggered his arthritis.

But when his grandson's cold hands gently massaged the driver's entire body, he no longer get any pain after eating the beans.

The next day, the INQUIRER chanced upon a pregnant woman and her mother, who said they went to Jun-Jun's house hoping to be healed.

JUN-JUN

Shiela Baldo, 25, who was eight months' pregnant and resident of neighboring Barangay Dapdap, said she also asked Jun-Jun to gently massage her stomach and guess what her baby's gender was.

"I was surprised when he told me that my baby would be a boy because that was also the result of my ultrasound test," she said.

Baldo's mother, Eden Apinado, 60, said she felt light when Jun-Jun touched her. She said she hoped that her blood pressure would normalize.

Jun-Jun's parents could not believe what happened to their son.

Shiela said the healing prayer was her son's favorite.

She added that late Tuesday afternoon, two men from the island municipality of Rapu-Rapu in Albay came to their house and asked to be healed by Jun-Jun.

"I told them that my son is not a healer. But Jun-Jun obliged to their request," Sheila said.

She, however, did not say what happened to the two men later.

On Wednesday morning, Fr. Efren Borromeo, popularly known as Father Momoy, the healing priest based in Trinitas Home for Contemplation, Retreat and Healing Center in Bonga, Bacacay, Albay, invited Jun-Jun for a healing session through the Child Sponsorship for Community Development Inc.

Shiela said Father Momoy prayed over Jun-Jun, whom he thought needed more healing because his nape had a minor problem, the reason, perhaps, why he could not hear clearly.

He also noted that Jun-Jun had a problem in the pharynx. "This may be the the reason he could not speak clearly and could not control his saliva," he said.

Father Momoy said he also got his gift of healing after he experienced a near-death situation.

A letter of Vilma Regidor Taroy of Quezon City (INQUIRER, Nov. 5, 2005) said Father Momoy attributed his gift of healing to a car accident several years back.

In the case of Jun-Jun, Father Momoy related what happened during the 12-hour period that he was reported without life.

He said he remembered being awakened by Jesus and saw many birds. He particularly saw a white bird and a black one.

He said he had observed that people in heaven never got hungry. *Niño Jesus Y. Orbeta, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

WB gives equipment grants to help reduce ozone-depleting substances

PAGADIAN CITY—AIR-CONDITIONING AND refrigeration service shops here will receive P100,000 worth of equipment grant from the World Bank to help them properly handle ozone-depleting substances, such as chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) found in coolants, an environment official in Western Mindanao said.

Nationwide, about 3,000 shop owners will also receive the same grant from the WB.

Edwin Custodio, information officer of the Environment Management Bureau in the Zamboanga Peninsula, said the grant was in line with the country's compliance with the 1992 Montreal Protocol.

The Philippines is a signatory to the agreement, which aims to phase out the use of CFC, an ozone-depleting substance believed to be one of the causes of global warming.

The ozone layer blocks harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun.

Custodio said the WB grant would be in the form of CFC recovery and storing machines.

These, he said, will be given to air-conditioning and refrigeration service shops, which are considered the largest users of CFC.

"Without these machines, service shops often expose CFCs to the atmosphere through leakage and improper storage. With these machines they can recover freon that contains CFC from the cooling systems of refrigerators and air conditioners without exposing it to the atmosphere," Custodio told the INQUIRER.

He said the equipment could also store and recycle coolants, reducing the use of CFC.

"Freons used as coolants do not dissipate, they can be recycled and used using the new equipment," Custodio said.

During a seminar jointly conducted recently here by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Trade and Industry, the shop owners were told that they only had until this year to use the grant.

The DTI said shop owners who would not adopt the new technology could no longer operate.

"Although it is a little late for the country to begin the CFC phaseout, it is still good to know that we are now implementing it with this new technology and by training technicians to handle CFC recovery and storage without exposing it to the atmosphere," said Ma. Socorro Malate-Atay, DTI provincial officer.

Atay said air-conditioning and refrigeration repair shops here would be strictly monitored for compliance with environmental laws. *Michael Sarcauga, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Farmers hold ritual to reopen road

By Delmar Cariño
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—FOR fear of losing their vegetable market at the trading post here, farmers in Kibungan town have decided to combine community effort with indigenous beliefs in a bid to reopen their main road that collapsed at the height of Typhoon "Florita."

Since July 18, 400 farmers have volunteered to leave their farms and with the use of shovels and hoes, worked at the mountain slope in Barangay Madaymen where the erosion occurred.

The road's cut portion, estimated to be more than 300 meters long, is the village's main access to the national highway where farmers ferry to the market 20 to 50 tons of carrots, potatoes and cabbages daily.

Madaymen has more than 1,000 farmers dependent on 3,000 hectares of farm land.

But the elders believe that the gods have something to do with the damaged road.

They said the taking of a big white grub along the area a few years back could have angered the gods.

Called "gagali" in the dialect, white grubs are crescent shaped larvae stage of beetles that inhabit the soil.

They feed on the roots of grasses and measure from three-fourths of an inch to 1.5 inches.

Board Member Joseph Cosente said the "gagali" is considered an "ay-ayam di baken maila" or "toy of the unseen."

It is commonly small and when it comes in a big size, Cosente said, it would be "unusual and rare and only by chance could one get to see it."

On July 20, the farmers' "bayanihan" spirit was marked with a ritual where the *mambunong* (native priest) offered pigs to appease the gods.

"The black pig was for the elders who asked for the gods' help while the white pig was served to the 'tumengaw' or the unseen," Cosente said.

He said the "gagali" that was reported to have been taken by some people in the village was first seen by the driver and conductor of a passenger bus in the area.

Cosente said the creature weighed about 3 kilograms but Mayor Murphy Paayas, in a separate interview, said it actually weighed "25 to 35 kg."

Paayas said the crew of a construction firm who worked along Halsema Highway also reported seeing two big white grubs in the past.

The road's collapse, said Cosente, "is the gods' way of telling the people that the white grub should not have been touched."

A truck was wrecked when the road eroded during the typhoon, bolstering Cosente's belief that indeed the gods were delivering a message.

Paayas said the farmers are using tramlines to transport their vegetable harvests on both ends of the damaged road.

The road's closure had isolated the people and their farms from the market, Paayas said.

Lack of medicine plagues new hospital in Quezon

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—A NEWLY INAUGURATED multimillion-peso government-owned hospital here is plagued with lack of medicines, something that the provincial hospital that it replaced had been giving to indigent patients.

The Quezon Medical Center rose from the site of the Quezon Memorial Hospital, which had for decades been serving the poor from different parts of the province.

Inaugurated on July 17, the project includes five buildings inside the vast hospital compound on the city outskirts.

Two more buildings are being built on both sides of the new edifice.

The project was estimated to cost P700 million in 2002. It would need a billion pesos more to be completed.

Ironically, as the inauguration of the modern hospital was taking place, a group of nursing students in the pediatric department was soliciting help from donors to buy medicines for poor patients.

Dr. Mario Cuento, assistant chief of the Quezon provincial health office, admitted the lack of medicines. "This is a government hospital. We only operate based on the budget allotted to us," he told the INQUIRER.

Budget

He said their office had a budget of only P110 million a year.

"Ideally, we should have at least four times the present budget," Cuento said.

Dr. Asuncion Anden, director of the Department of Health in the National Capital Region who was the guest speaker during the inauguration, challenged government officials to improve the health conditions of the people, particularly the poor.

"These facilities will not mean anything unless we have quality service, unless we improve our professionalism, unless we truly have a touch of charity and love for every individual who come into this building," she said in her speech.

Provincial board members were cynical.

"Despite the grandeur of the building, this is a government hospital which should still provide free medicines, especially for the indigent patients," Board Member Eladio Pasamba said.

Pasamba said he had been supporting the hospitalization of 10 to 20 patients at the QMC at any given time.

"But I can't remember any of my patients being able to receive free medicines from the hospital. I was the one buying all the medicines," he said.

Depressing

Board Member Noli Tan, president of the barangay chairs' association in Quezon, echoed the same problem.

"That's the report that I have been receiving from my fellow barangay officials. It's really depressing," Tan said.

Board Member Rommel Edaño said the lack of medicines at the QMC had already resulted in the death of a number of poor patients.

He said the modernization and upgrading of that QMC must include other government hospitals in different parts of the province.

He noted that up to 80 percent of QMC patients came from Lucena and peripheral towns.

"How about those indigent patients from far-flung areas?" he asked.

Daisy Borja, officer in charge of the QMC-Medical Social Service, said free medicines could only be given depending on available stocks at the hospital pharmacy.

However, she said, the patients should show documents to support their claims of indigent status.

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PURPOSE Best-selling author of "The Purpose Drive Life" Rick Warren talks about his PEACE plan during a press briefing at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City yesterday. RUDY ESPERAS

God has purpose for OFWs, asserts top-selling author

By Blanche S. Rivera

THEY MIGHT BE TRAPPED IN BACK-BREAKING WORK AND caught up in the middle of turmoil abroad, but overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) are at the center of God's purpose for the Philippines, according to the author of the bestseller "The Purpose Driven Life."

Rick Warren, who arrived in Manila yesterday for the Philippine launch of the Global PEACE Plan, hailed OFWs as the modern "Josephs" who have been placed in strategic places to provide blessings for their families and the people of other countries.

"I don't know a people so spread out all over the world as Filipinos," Warren said in a press conference yesterday.

The biblical Joseph, son of Jacob, was sold as a slave to the home of the Egyptian pharaoh. Through diligence and faith, he was able to work his way up to become the most trusted and important leader of Egypt who was used by God to save his family and Israel from famine.

Like missionaries

"God has placed overseas Filipino workers in the homes of the most influential people in the world. They are like missionaries. God wants to use you to bless other nations," Warren said.

Warren recounted the story of a Filipino baker who had been working for the leader of an Islamic nation for 13 years. The king, whom Warren did not name, came to the baker and offered to double his salary if he converted to Islam.

The Filipino, however, declined, saying that he already had a relationship with Jesus Christ.

The king asked him why he was serving the Muslim leader so well, and the OFW answered: "Because of my love for the Lord. Jesus tells me to love my neighbor as myself, so I do, and I do everything with excellence."

Despite being turned down, the king still doubled the baker's salary.

Christ's love

"That baker did what I in my capacity as a pastor cannot do officially, which is to speak about Christ's love to a Muslim king," Warren said.

"The message of God for the Philippines is not just for this country but for the world. When God touches this country, He's also touching the whole world," he said.

Government records show that the number of overseas employment contracts processed for land and sea-based OFWs last year reached 981,337, or an average of 2,711 contracts every day.

Warren and his wife Kay are in Manila for a two-day National Purpose-Driven Congress that will launch the Global PEACE Plan that, according to him, is a grassroots movement aimed at addressing spiritual emptiness, corruption, poverty, disease and illiteracy.

It was the first time Warren had been back to the Philippines since his book, "The Purpose Driven Life," was released. The book, named by Publisher's Weekly as the best-selling hardbound book in American history, has sold at least 25 million copies worldwide.

"I love this country. When I came back, I felt like I was coming home," said Warren, who has been described by Time magazine as one of 15 World Leaders Who Mattered Most in 2004 and one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World in 2005.

The Philippines's year

"The fourth reason I am here is because I believe God wants to do a spiritual national transformation in the great nation of the Philippines, and I believe it could start this year," he said.

The Purpose Driven network, a global coalition of congregations in 162 countries, has trained more than 400,000 ministers and priests. Warren's California-based Saddleback Church has more than 300 community outreach people touching base with prisoners, persons with HIV/AIDS, single parents, businessmen, addicts and homeless people.

"There's more to life than work and success. Meaning does not come through possession or position or prosperity or power or prestige. It comes through purpose. And the more we know our purpose in life, the more fulfilled, the more meaningful life becomes," Warren said.

Among the Warrens' welcomers were celebrities Gary and Angeli Valenciano, Jericho Rosales, Jamie Rivera, as well as government and Church leaders.

NAIA to Quezon City: P 142.50

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More 'e-libraries' set in Quezon City

22 public schools to have 'unlimited, easy, fast access' to information

By DJ Yap

QUEZON CITY IS PUTTING AN "e" in library.

Twenty-two more public schools in the city will have "e-libraries" as part of the local government's effort to connect libraries to the Internet and computerize their public access and cataloging systems.

The city recently announced the expansion of its Serbisyong Bayan or SB e-library school program through the inclusion of more schools.

Among the schools selected for the program were Quezon City Science High School, Commonwealth High School, Lagro Elementary School and Libis Elementary School.

First started in 2003, the e-library program, which seeks to provide "unlimited, easy and fast access" to information on various projects, initially benefited just 11 schools.

The project also aims to keep public school libraries abreast of developments in information technology and improve the teaching of subjects through Internet access, according to Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr.

Under the program, the libraries shall be equipped with a CD-ROM station and computers that will offer visitors on-line access to the library catalogs.

Ateneo de Manila University's Rizal Library has also offered free automation software for the new e-libraries.

BREAK TIME
Members of the K9 unit of the Philippine National Police relax by playing a game of chess which their bomb sniffing dogs seem to be following closely. The team was part of the policemen deployed to the House of Representatives in preparation for today's State of the Nation Address to be delivered by President Macapagal-Arroyo. JOAN BONDOC

Makati to start testing babies in lying-in clinics

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) has given the Makati City Health Office the green light to conduct newborn screening tests for infants in its lying-in clinics, City Hall announced yesterday.

Dr. Ma. Lourdes Salud, city health office chief, said the newborn screening, performed 24 hours after birth, would boost the detection of congenital metabolic disorders in newborns which may lead to mental retardation, physical deformity, serious health complications or even death, if not detected.

The screening will be carried out in three lying-in clinics at Barangays Bangkal in District I and Comembo and Guadalupe Nievo in District II beginning next week. Each center has already been equipped with the necessary testing kits.

The centers' eight doctors and 24 midwives recently completed the training required by the DOH to perform newborn screening, Salud reported.

The DOH accreditation, Salud said in a statement yesterday, would bolster the city's goal of becoming a child-friendly city.

She added that the city government has taken active steps to promote awareness among Makati residents of the importance of newborn screening in ensuring their children's healthy development.

Parents will be charged P600 for the test. "This is but a small price to pay when compared with the immeasurable long-term benefits to be gained not just by the child," Salud said.

DepEd probes girl's death

By Alcuin Papa

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DepEd) said yesterday it was investigating the cause of death of an 8-year-old student who died last Thursday after her teacher reportedly banged her head against a classmate last July 14.

"Although there is an ongoing investigation, I also want the department's central office to look into it and determine if the child's death was a result of her head being banged by her teacher," DepEd Officer in Charge Fe Hidalgo said in an interview.

Last Wednesday, Ma. Jessalyn Palma, a Grade II student of the Sucat Elementary School died. Five days before, her teacher, Esperanze Balderes, 62, reportedly banged the girl's head against the head of another student for being naughty.

Palma was later rushed to the Ospital ng Muntinlupa after she started vomiting.

The autopsy report said that the girl died due to "traumatic shock leading to cerebral hemorrhage."

Hidalgo admitted that the report had alarmed her and she wanted to determine if there was negligence on the part of the teacher.

"We need to know if the incident really happened. But if that really happened, I will not let this pass," she stressed.

Balderes, meanwhile, has been asked to go on forced leave for two days. If she is proven guilty, administrative and criminal charges will be filed against her.

Mahal Ko, Bayan Ko

Sa isip, sa salita at sa gawa.

MAHAL KO BAYAN KO

- Our country is moving forward.
  Let us not get in the way of our own progress.
  The sacrifices we make for our country today
  will outlive any government

- We appeal for a stop of all acts
  that divide our people and
  that waste our time and resources.

- NO to non-stop fault-finding.
  NO to any form of power grab.
  YES to constructive fiscalizing.
  YES to actions that inspire hope.
  YES to celebrating our achievements.

- Magkaisa tayo. Sa tulong ng Diyos, kaya natin ito.

Tama Na ang Gulo! Let's Move On!

Aaron, Cherry F.
Abad, Carlo
Abad, Francisco
Abad, Jelina
Abad, Jenalyn
Abad, Rosalia
Abais, Reinaldo
Abarquez, Manuel
Abaygar, Ma. Luz
Abelardo, Lilo
Abeleda, Cory
Abeleda, Cory
Aberin, Precy
Aberin, Cresenciana
Aberin, Jocelyn
Abesamis, Eva
Abing, Marietta
Ablan, Victoria
Abiona, Shirmin
Abogador, Roselier
Abonales, Joel
Abrasado, Salvacion
Absolor, Tita
Abubakar, Myra
Abueva, Teodoro B.
Abuloc, Mercy
Abundo, Elena
Abundo, Racela
Abundo, Ramona
Acebedo, June Ceazar
Acero, Marietta
Achaves, Vilma Caro
Acidre, Nora
Acovera, Regie
Adad, Antonio
Adad, Myrna
Adame, Ally Millet
Adame, Irango B.
Ado, Victory
Adobas, Golma
Adolfo, Cristina
Adviento, Rose
Advincula, Luis
Advincula, Pat
Afos, Romeo
Africa, Lyn
Agad, Kathylen Joy
Agcaoili, Alexx
Agcaoili, Mitos
Agcaoili, Tony
Agdagdag, Veronica
Agdagdag, Dolores
Agdagdag, Veronica
Ageas, Maryneza
Aggarao, Dayton
Agoso, Charito
Aguilar, Cipriano
Aguilar, Diosio
Aguinaldo, Neno
Agustin, Delia
Agustin, Janet
Aidasani, Honorata C
Alar, Ricardo III
Alamanco, Aisa
Alamani, Jefferson
Alayay, Nelson
Alba Siscar, Dame
Albano, Emee Lei
Albayda, Norma
Alberca, Aaron
Alberca, Marley
Albert, Joyrosa
Alberto, Jose
Alcala, Virginia D.
Alcantara, Aurea
Alcaraz, Ma Carmen
Alcasid, Beng
Alcid, Monica
Alcuaz, Ma. Carmen
Aldaba, Lina
Aldaye, Emilia
Alejandrino Viloria, Sr.
Alejandrino, Linda
Alejandro, Linda
Alfaras, Faith
Alfredo C. Suyat
Ali Mercia
Alina, Totoy
Alingalan, Adora
Alingasa, Boy
Alip, Gemma
Allen Munion
Allen, Connie Velasquez
Almiana, Deas Reyes
Almazar, William A.
Almeda, Cris F.
Almeda, Mila
Alo, Dennis
Alo, Nimfa
Alonso, Cesy
Alonzo, Haidie
Alonzo, Ida
Alonzo, Minerva
Alonzo, Monica
Alpon, Angelique
Alquesada, Pat L.
Alterado, Joesyl
Alutaya, Lhoi
Alvarado, Lilia
Alvarez, Nora
Alvar, Lusita
Alzate, Connie
Ambong, Lea
Amigo, George
Amigo, Joevin
Amigo, Pablito
Amistoso, Edgar Y
Amistoso, Ricardo
Amolo, Alma
Amoran, Andoga
Amparo, Teresita
Ana Ortiz
Ancheta, Paz
Andal, Yolly
Andales, Marilyn
Andaya III, Jose
Andaya Jr. Jose
Andaya, Carol
Andaya, Teresita L.
Andilab, Sharif Ray M.
Andrews, Marilou
Andrews, Rina
Angeles, Joseph Anton
Angeles, Yna
Angioni, MZKG
Anag, Froi
Anaon, Edito
Anaon, Marietta Coba
Ando, Sarah
Annang, Doming
Annalyn C. Castillo
Antonio C. Salvo
Antonio, Pepito
Aparez, Socorro
Aplasca, Margie
Aquilo, Marlon S.
Aquino, Cherry
Aquino, Choy
Aquino, Flotz
Aquino, Popsy Mendez
Aquino, Tin-tin
Aquino, Virgilio
Arafol, Sarah P
Aragon, Dr. Michael
Aranzamendez, Christine
Aranzamendez, Ludy
Arbozon, Marlon C.
Arceo, Joy
Arceo, Mariano
Arcilla, Agrifina
Arellano, Monina
Argawanon, James P.
Ariel Ortilla
Arkoncel, Pery
Arnado, Jocelyn
Arnaldo, Delia
Arnaldo, Mila
Aro, Dionisio M
Arogones, Alice
Arranguel, Gloria
Arrastia, Fe
Arroyo, Camela
Arroyo, Salvador
Arrozal, Socorro
Artadi, Aggie
Artadi, Lorenzo
Artadi, Sandra
Artaga, Mely
Ascaño, Antonio M. Jr
Ascano, Julie
Asencio, Fides C.
Asulon, Albert
Asuncion, Ma. Carmen
Atega, Alice
Atega, Vicente B.
Atienza, Babes
Atienza, Bles
Atienza, Josefa
Aton, Ally Zenaida
Auxtero, Juvelinda
Auxtero, Panfilo
Avanceña, Ma. Lourdes A.
Avellana, Albert
Avellano, Lorelyn
Avellano, Sergio
Ayco, Allan A.
Ayora, Adelbert
Ayora, Aurora
Ayora, Diana
Ayora, Mary Grace
Ayora, Salvador
Ayson, Ivan Lester
Aytona, Ma. Aisa
Azucena Migrinio
Azul, Eleanor
Baba, Joel P.
Babera, Joel S
Babst, Alex
Babst, Raymond
Babst, Stephanie
Babst, Suzette
Baclod, V Nañagas
Badal, Mary Ann
Badoy, Pura Tianco
Bagacay, Maximo
Bajar, Joemar
Bajar, Ligaya
Balbin, Amador
Balbin, Joanne
Balbin, Milagros
Balbiran, Lorevic
Balbuena, Zennette
Balce, Pilaring
Balce, Mikaela
Balce, Regina Buyson
Balcells, Ana
Balde, Felito A.
Balderrama, Agnes
Balendong, Najera
Balendong, Okil
Balingit, Beth
Balladares, Rene
Balmaceda, Tess
Balquidra, Nerilyn
Baltazar, Armando
Baltazar, Rene
Baltazar, Teresita
Baluyot, Josefino B.
Balwit, Gerardo
Bambalan, Acisclo D.
Bamial, Lydia
Bandiang, Crusanto
Bantal, Wenifreda
Bantilan, Jonas
Banzon, Judilyn
Baracoros, Heidi
Barcenal, Jacquelyn
Barello, Au
Barello, Judi
Barello, Luchi
Bargaso, Dennis
Baron, Catalina
Baron, Cynthia
Baron, Gerardo
Barral, Estela
Barredo, Andy
Barrera, Angie
Barrera, Felix
Barreto Luchi
Barreto, Au
Barretto, Jovie
Bartolome, Ma. Lourdes
Basa, Maricel
Basadre, Jim Abao
Batacian, Rebecca
Bathan, Sharrie Ann
Batilo, Martha
Batungbacal, Angeline
Batungbacal, Cynthia
Batungbacal, Rosita
Bausa, Lolita C.
Bauso, Sherwin A.
Bautista, Emily
Bautista, Erlinda
Bautista, Juliet R
Bautista, Margie
Bautista, Rodrigo
Baysa, Lolita
Beley, Lydia
Belizario, Dr. Francisco
Belo, Ed
Beltran, Danilo
Beltran, Gloria
Benavides, Charito
Benavides, Sura
Benavidez, Josephine C.
Benedicto, Reian
Bengzon, Emily
Benitez, Suzie M.
Bensig, Ellen
Benzon, Al
Bermejo, Marina
Bermudez, Cornelio
Bernabe, Mayor Florencio
Bernados, Lucy
Bernardo G. de Asis
Bernardo, Emy
Bernardo, Leslie
Beth Reely
Bien, Joji Ilagan
Bias, Ester
Bienvenida, Charize
Bing Chavez
Biona, Rossana
Bilanga, Marilyn
Blanco, Aurea
Blanco, Ladio
Blanco, Ma. Nila
Blanco, Wilfredo
Boayes, Luzomita
Bocalbo, Osmond
Boco, Macario
Bolina Ma. Isabel
Bonifacio, Tina
Borja, Christine
Borja, Jojo
Borlar, Ana
Bolecano, Jonathan
Brawner, Rita
Brodit, Moonyeen
Brosas, Evelyn
Brosas, Oscar
Bruma, Rogelio G.
Bruno, Jasmine
Buencamino, Bessy
Buencamino, Gabriela
Buencamino, Grace
Buencamino, Nora
Buencamino, Victor Jr
Buendia, Lydia
Bueno, Karen Ann
Buhay, Gilda G
Buhay, Sheila
Bumaat, Teodis
Bufiag, Edita
Butch Pesebre
Buyson, Elsa T.
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Caare, Joanna D
Cabading, Ernesto
Cabading, Mercedo
Cabal, Dawn Lesley
Cabaong, Jhoanice C.
Cabarles, Marivic
Cabatuña, Rodrilo
Cabatic, Alex
Cabe, Anna
Cabinoy, Randy
Caboribol, Xyza
Cabrera, Alice
Cabrera, Lou
Cabrera, Michelle
Cabugwason, Mercedita
Cabunilas, Maruchel
Cacho, Bettina
Cacho, Ma. Elena
Cachuela, Margie
Cadag, Nilda
Cagaguio, Jupiter
Cagaoite, Jayson J.
Cailo, Reanalyn
Cailo, Fandzna
Calado, Haydi
Calagui, Eric
Calagui, Rudy
Calanoga, Meden
Calansayan, Norbert R.
Calalon, Melanie
Calderon, Lydia
Calderon, Manta F.
Calma, Lor
Calma, Stella
Calnuyas, Josie G.
Camague, Terosi
Camara, Denela
Camba, Dondon
Camba, Edwin
Camba, Elena
Camba, Erlinda
Camba, Glona
Camba, Leonora
Camba, Lilia M.
Camba, Lilibeth
Camba, Ronnie
Camba, Salvador
Camus, Virginia T
Cañares, Cyprus
Cancio, Agustin
Cancio, Gerardo
Cancio, Marcita
Cancio, Mark
Cancio, Tony
Canda, Asher
Canete, Lucrecio
Canicula, Amy
Canicula, Edna
Cañiza, Rosana
Cañiza, Trinidad O.
Canlon, Adriano
Caoda, Noe
Capanas, Lourdes
Caparas, Baby
Caparas, Mariano B.
Caparas, Vicente
Capiendo, Jeros
Capinpin, Josefina
Capitan, Loida
Capricho, Allan
Carabio, Anthony
Carablo, Antonio
Carablo, Jason
Carablo, Jelne
Carablo, Josefina
Carablo, Julius
Carag, Luisa C
Carandang, Caren P.
Carandang, Ramon V
Carballo, Victoria
Caresosa, Juan Jr.
Cariaga, Evelyn
Caringal, Ernesto
Caringal, Linda
Caringal, Lynne
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Carlos, Norma
Carpio, Marie Angelie
Cartillo, Lourdes
Casado, Milagros
Casala, Mars
Casala, Milagros
Casala, Ruby
Casala, Rudy
Casin, Sarah
Castañeda, Bing S.
Castañeda, Dolores
Castaneda, Jonald
Castaner, Carmen
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Castillo, Amelia L.
Castillo, Annalyn C.
Castillo, Benjamin
Castillo, Chita
Castillo, Fe
Castillo, George
Castillo, Nino Joseph
Castillo, Remedios L.
Castillo, Romulo
Castro, Consuel B.
Castro, Leilani P
Castro, Lourdes E.
Castro, Victoria B
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Catan, Jared
Catolico, Naty
Catolo, Ramir
Cauguiran, Alexander
Cava, Mitchell
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Celdran, Anita
Celis, Rupert
Celiz, Joseph Anthony
Cenas, Michael
Ceniza, Danny
Centeno, Flor
Cento, Bienvenida
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Chan, Teresa
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Chanyungco, Mardi
Chanyungco, Nini
Charles, Raynaldo L
Chavez, Bing
Chicano, Constantino
Chicano, Isabelo
Chicano, Kimo
Chicano, Ma Carla Sheena
Chong, Aldrich L.
Chong, Frederick R.
Chong, Lenie L.
Choy, Cookie
Chua, Mavis
Chua, Nancy
Cinco, Wilson
Cipriano, Jun
Clavona, Sheryl
Clemente, Elma
Co, Edith
Colipano, Roslyn
Collamar, Mylene
Columna, Oscar V.
Concha Honiberos
Condes, Conchita S
Condes, Sonia
Condrada, Maria C.
Consumido, Danilo A.
Cordero, Cyress
Cordero, Valene Cybil
Cordoba, Jose Carlos C.
Coronel, Malou
Corpus, Ada Feliciano
Corpus, Betsy Tan
Corpus, Tony
Corpuz, Amilita
Cortez, Chona I
Cortez, Gracesita
Cosio, Augusto
Cosio, Didit Male
Costelo, Angelie
Cricket Manotok
Crisostomo, Estelito
Cristobal, Ma. Ruby
Cristobal, Paz M.
Cruz, Arnaldo
Cruz, Blessie Labra
Cruz, Danous
Cruz, Elvis
Cruz, Eric
Cruz, Heidi P.
Cruz, Ileana
Cruz, Joey
Cruz, Jun
Cruz, Loni
Cruz, Michael
Cruz, Nona
Cua Ho, Richard John
Cuañag, Vincent Romel
Cuenca, Pinky
Cuenco, Joanna Marie V
Cuerva, Ramon
Cuevas, Tessie
Cunanan, Winnie M.
Cuyegkeng, Antonio II
Cuyegkeng, Marietta
Cuyegkeng, Martin
Dacara, Katherin Loren
Dacello, Nikko
Dacior, Ronald
Dadivas, Bonifacio
Dadulo, Rose
Dagat, Imelda
Daguman, Teresita
Dagle, Catherine E.
Dalpatan, Vicentito
Dalusong, Anita C.
Danao, Joanne
Dang, Junilla
Dante, Ray Adrian
Daquiat, Carol M.
Daques, Carlos
Darras, Adela
Dasmariñas, Rodel S
Datoc, Katrina
Datoc, R. J.
David, Ellen
Davila, Marina
Dayamo, Vanessa
Daza, Nora V.
de Asis, Analiza M
de Asis, Bernardo G.
de Asis, Virgilio
de Castro, Ben
de Castro, Clarissa
de Castro, Cristina
de Castro, Dave
de Castro, Michael
de Claro, Conto
de Guia, Rachelle
de Guzman, Crispin
de Guzman, Elvira
de Guzman, Ernesto
de Guzman, Frances
de Guzman, Maximo
de Guzman, Rosendo
de la Cruz, Arsenio
de la Cruz, Eugene Benedict
de la Cruz, Jayan
de la Cruz, Jessa
de La Cruz, Marilyn
de la Cruz, Mario
de la Cruz, Mary Therese B.
de la Cruz, Rosalie
de la Cruz, Ryan
de la Cuesta, Emily
de la Peña, Mamerto
de la Rosa, Arlene
de la Rosa, Elen
de la Rosa, Ester
de la Rosa, Imelda
de la Rosa, Jonathan
de Lara, John Christopher
de Leon, Bernadette
de Leon, Bunny
de Leon, Honey Girl
de Leon, Lila
de Leon, Mary Madrigal
de Leon, Maura
de los Reyes, Janelle
de los Reyes, Jody
de los Santos, Mel
de Ocampo, Rose
de Ocampo, Venus
de Pablo, Gelson
de Paz, Deborah
de Vera, Edna
de Villa, Baby G.
de Villa, Vicky
Decena, Chit
Decin, Junar R.
Dejero, Jocelyn
Dejero, Rita
Dejoras, Antonio
del Castillo, Josie
del Fonzo, Mila
del Rosario, Bobby
del Rosario, Jaison
del Rosario, Kookie
del Rosario, Mario
del Rosario, Marites
del Rosario, Manza
del Socorro, Rebecca
Delfin, Precelyn B.
Delgado, Joevannio
Dellava, Rowena
Depaz, Gabriel
Desolok, Axel
Deza, Rico
Diaz de Rivera, Helen R.
Diaz, Allan P
Diaz, Bhools Jr.
Diaz, Isagani
Diaz, Janice Kalhlynne
Diaz, Maribel
Diaz, Mancar
Diaz, Medea
Diaz, Mely
Diaz, Milly
Diaz, Nadel Botchy
Diaz, Nina
Diaz, Reynaldo P.
Diaz, Virginia
Dico, Reann
Dida Fernandez
Diesto, Mark
Dilnila, Arnel Alvin
Dimayuga, Rosario G.
Dina Olvido
Dina Sarmiento
Dinoros, Olga
Dino Ogardo
Dionisio M. Ano
Dionisio, Anna Mariel
Dionisio, Carlo
Dionisio, Deo
Dionisio, Dino
Dionisio, Minia
Dionisio, Tweenie
Dionisio, Victorio
Dioso, Anna
Dipaz, Gabriel
Dizon, Bernard
Dizon, Danilo
Dizon, Girlie
Dizon, Teichie
Dolera, Rose
Dolera, Rosemarie B
Dolores Castaneda
Dolores, Roger
Dolosa, Godiardo
Domingo, Adelaida
Domingo, Ada
Domingo, Alfredo
Dominguez, Luzviminda
Dominguez, Mel F
Doplayna, Cheche
Dosdos, Jury
Ducayan, Peter
Ducusin, Jason
Dufalla, Gilda
Dumaup, Art
Dumo, Jeannette
Dumoran, Arlene
Dumoran, Domingo
Dumoran, Felipe
Dumoran, Jovanie
Dumoran, Narcisa
Dumoran, Richard
Dumoran, Ronald
Dumoran, Soteio
Dy, Gemma
Ebong, Faiza
Eleazar, Gabriela
Elnar, Darlene
Elumba, Celia
Encabo, Noel
Enriquez, Concesa
Enriquez, Joyce
Enriquez, Milagros
Ensano, Gie
Ermita, Belle
Ermitano, Virgilio
Ero, Jay
Erusman, Elsa
Escabos, Jonel
Escabos, Victor
Escalante, Nani L.
Escalante, Nani L.
Escobar, Esperanza
Escobilla, Antonio F.
Escorpiso, Ma. Teresa
Esguerra, Feriget
Esguerra, Geofer
Esguerra, Giogette
Espago, Adelaida
Espago, Antonio
Espago, Maribeth
Espago, Marilou
Espago, Ramon
Espanillo, Elmer C.
Espartero, Bernadette
Espe, Leni
Espedido, Lolita
Espedido, Teresita
Esperanza Escobar
Espeso, Merlin
Espina, Abraham
Espina, Emerald
Espino, Leslie
Espino, Marlyn
Espiritu, Christian
Espiritu, Helen G.
Espiritu, Jovita
Espiritu, Roberto
Esquivel, Lina J.
Estanco, Julius C.
Esteban, Edison
Esteban, Ronnel B.
Estomata, Venancio
Estrenacion, Rebecca
Etrorma, Horacio
Eusebio, Giezel
Eusebio, Gregorio III
Eusebio, Gretchen
Eusebio, Lolita
Eustaquio, Christine
Evangelista, Milagros
Evido, Eduardo
Ezpeleta, Caroline
Fabia, Rezbia
Fabian, Pamelaa
Facundo, Juanito
Fallana, Ma. Socorro
Fango, Helen N
Farah, Galban
Farah, Marcel
Felias, Arturo B
Feliciano, T.
Felipe, Cesar
Felipe, Marilyn
Felipe, Merchie
Fenton, Gina
Fenton, Kenneth
Feman, Elo
Fernandez, Alberto F
Fernandez, Billy
Fernandez, Dida
Fernandez, Elsie
Fernandez, Hazel
Fernandez, Leandro T
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Fernandez, Mark Anthony
Fernandez, Mely
Fernandez, Peluchi
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Geronimo, Menchu
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Pili, Ima
Pili, Mr. & Mrs Rey
Pilo, Theresa
Pineda, Lucia
Pineda, Patrick
Pineda, Rosalina
Pinili, Mervin I.
Pitacio, Marilou
Pitogo, Yuben
Planas, Charito
Planas, Sim

Two COPS share common dream

By DJ Yap

BOTH OF THEM HOLD SUPERINTENDENT rank, but the paths they took in their rise through the police hierarchy could not have been more different.

She is a station commander in Quezon City, who protects the community from criminal syndicates, land-grabbers and petty thieves. He heads the intelligence unit of a task force handling sensitive kidnap-for-ransom cases at Camp Crame.

She solves widely varying conflict situations from mobile phone snatching to rape and murder. He is a specialist in handling tense negotiations for abduction cases.

While their respective careers in the police force are poles apart, Felicidad R. Gido and Edgar G. Iglesia share a singular vision: One day, the people will look up to them—and the institution they represent—with trust and confidence.

It is a vision the Philippine National Police have long aspired to, but Gido and Iglesia, two of this year's Country's Outstanding Policemen in Service (COPS), are content with taking little steps, slowly but surely, toward their goal.

Act of kindness

For Gido, commander of the Galas Police Station, it can start with a simple act of kindness: "If you do something good for a member of your community, they'll know one way or the other. It will spread somehow, from one mouth to another."

She recalled how the wife of a robbery suspect had kept visiting him in the cell with her young child in tow. When Gido asked her why she kept bringing the child along, the mother said she could not leave her child at home alone.

Gido took pity on the woman and ended up giving her the P2,000 bail recommended for her husband's offense.

"That story made the rounds in the community," Gido said. "Since then, every time there's a crime or incident in that area, people would make it a point to call the station," she added.

War on corruption

Another way to win people's hearts, according to Iglesia, chief of the Intelligence, Research and Analysis Division of the Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response (Pacer), is to institute policies that guard against corruption.

One such measure he implemented once he became the Pacer's intelligence chief was never to allow agents to take rewards, monetary or otherwise, from the families of kidnap victims.

"It's become our tradition. We don't invite them to our birthdays and the like," he said.

Iglesia observed that on such occasions, members of the Filipino-Chinese community find it natural to hand out cash to police officers who helped solve their case.

But the principle behind the no-reward policy is actually to improve the relationship between the police operatives and the families of kidnap victims, he said.

No rewards, please

"When they know that you don't take rewards, it's easier to get their trust. They know you won't conspire with the enemy. This way, they will want to cooperate with you," Iglesia said.

From dozens of entries nationwide, Gido and Iglesia, with eight other winners, were recently cited by Metrobank Foundation, in cooperation with the Rotary Club of New Manila East, as this year's outstanding police officers.

They received a cash prize of P150,000 each and a trophy.

The other winners were Superintendents Policarpio Cayabyab Jr. and Tomasito Clet, for the commissioned officer category, and SPO4 Mercedes Garcia, PO2 Rodel Javison, SPO3 Nestor Kahano, PO3 Rosalie Somblingo, SPO1 Recto Valeriano and PO3 Tejanne Zarzoso, for the noncommissioned officer category.

A native of Pangasinan, Gido, 53, is a mother of six and the wife of Supt. Bertran Gido, a police officer detailed at the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency based in Davao.

She only wanted a gun

She has been in the service for 28 years, since first working as a typist at Camp Crame. In 1985, she was applying for a gun but was told she could only get hold of one if she joined the police force.

Before long, Gido, who is also a lawyer after passing the bar in 1996, became a patrol woman and began what would become a long and fruitful career as a police officer.

As commander of Lagro Police Station (before she was transferred to Galas), Gido helped solve the huge squatting problem in Phase 8, North Fairview, which until recently had seen some 8,000 informal settlers appropriating 1,260 lots in the subdivision.

Under her leadership, the station was able to recover about 100 lots, which were turned over to the property owners.

Crackdown on gangs

Another breakthrough was the dismantling of an organized squatting syndicate, composed of members of the "Tadtad Gang," with the killing of five members, including two of their leaders.

Gido also led the arrest of more than 30 robbery/holdup suspects, such as those belonging to "Ipit" and "Estribo" gangs, as well as the neutralization of major drug or illegal recruitment syndicates in the area.

She said her leadership style involved the participation of the community.

"I always make it a point to visit each of the barangays in my area. I talk to the barangay captains, and I visit the people who live there," she said.

Gaining the trust of the people means being there to listen, Gido said. "You have to mingle with them, touch them, hear them. For them to be able to tell you their problems, sometimes it's already a big help," she said.

PMA graduate

Iglesia, on the other hand, is an alumnus of the Philippine Military Academy, who had honed his talents at the defunct Philippine Constabulary before joining the PNP two decades ago.

Married and with four children, Iglesia, 44, has been handling kidnap-for-ransom cases since 1991 when he was first assigned to the PNP Intelligence Group.

Since then, he has played a major role in the handling of kidnap cases through the Negotiation Standard Operating Procedure which he conceptualized for Pacer.

Iglesia, who holds a Master's degree in public administration, was responsible for the neutralization of a number of dreaded KFR groups, such as Waray-Ilonggo and the Fajardo groups.

He also headed the teams that apprehended Mitchell Gumabao, alias Dennis Roldan, the former actor involved in a celebrated kidnapping case now being heard in court.

Nemesis of kidnappers

Iglesia also helped capture Lupin Superable and Cesar Amado, the country's third and fourth most wanted kidnappers, whose arrest eventually led to the solution of the Betty Chua Sy kidnapping case.

He said the solution of crisis situations like kidnapping cases rested on the cooperation between the police and the victim's family;

TWO / A28

BEST COPS Gido (left) and Iglesia ERIK ARAZAS

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DID YOU KNOW

CONSTRUCTION of the House of Representatives (also known as the Batasang Pambansa) began in 1958 as part of the government's plan to make Quezon City—then the country's capital—the main government center of the Philippines. It took two decades to complete the complex because of funding problems.

The House main building is where the Plenary Hall is located. It is where representatives deliberate on bills and where the President delivers the annual State of the Nation Address. ***Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research***

Crimes down in eastern Metro

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE NUMBER OF CRIMES REPORTED IN the first half of the year in the eastern part of Metro Manila went down this year compared to the same period in 2005.

Figures from the Eastern Police District (EPD) showed that total crime volume shrank from 1,182 reported incidents during the first half of 2005 to only 814 reported incidents during the first half of 2006.

But the figures also showed that there were more robbery and theft incidents reported this year compared to the same period in previous years.

There were 346 crimes against properties reported from January to June this year. The figure was higher compared to the 282 theft and robbery incidents reported in the first half of 2005 and to the 217 theft and robbery incidents reported during the first half of 2004.

The EPD has jurisdiction over the cities of Marikina, Mandaluyong, Pasig and the town of San Juan.

From January to June 2006, at least 186 robberies were reported in the eastern part of Metro Manila, making robbery the most common index crime.

There were at least 160 theft cases during the same period, the report added.

Robbery incidents are those carried out with force or intimidation like holdup. Theft cases, on the other hand, include pickpocketing, "akyat-bahay" and snatching.

Police officials have long blamed the increasing crimes against properties on worsening poverty.

July 24, 2006

HER EXCELLENCY GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

Dear Madam President;

In the light of your State of the Nation Address (SONA), we would like to express our full support to your call for unity and personal sacrifice in order to promote the greater common good.

For our part, we have taken the initiative of belt tightening in the midst of the continued increase in oil prices. We have opted to explore all means to cut cost in order to survive during these difficult times. Government assistance to cushion the impact of high fuel prices is critical.

While there is a lot of room for improvement in the systems and processes, as well as in the delivery of public service, we see that all these are being addressed. Under the able leadership of DOTC Secretary Leandro Mendoza and LTFRB Chairperson Ma. Elena Bautista, but more importantly, with Your Excellency's continued support and guidance, we are confident that the age-old problems besetting the land transport industry will be resolved.

We appreciate Your Excellency's efforts in helping the land transport industry address rising overhead cost. With Secretary Leandro Mendoza and Chairperson Ma . Elena Bautista at the helm, rest assured that we are UNITED behind your programs and policies.

MORE POWER AND GOD BLESS!

Very Truly Yours,

ZENAIDA MARANAN, *National President, FTJODAP*
ORLANDO MARQUEZ, *National President, PJODAF*
ELEANOR SANTOS, *President, NEMBOG*
HOMER MERCADO, *President, SOLUBOA / PBOAP*
JULIET DE JESUS, *Vice President, IMBOA*
MELENCIO VARGAS, *National President, ALTODAP*
CONRAD SINCLOCO, *Vice President, MJODA*
ALBERT ABUY, *President, PATTO*
JUN MAGNO, *Nat'l Pres., FX / AUV Operators & Drivers Assoc.*
MA. LOURDES GROVES, *G LINER, MMBOA*
JIMMY CANDO, *GAZAI, INTERBOA*
CHITO ALEJANDRO, *CHER TRANSPORT*
ELIZABETH MENDOZA, *JOYSELL EXPRESS, NEMBOG*
JOSE NERY, *MAFEL TRANSIT, NEMBOG*
NICK SORIANO, *N.S. TRANS, NEMBOG*
ROLANDO SANTOS, *RAINBOW EXPRESS, NEMBOG*
SEVERINO SANTOS, *LUZON BUS LINES*
MADELENE GUILLERMO, *EVERLASTING TRANS , NEMBOG*
MELISSA LIM, *DON MARIANO TRANS , IMBOA*
TANCE VILLEGAS, *JB-STAR, IMBOA*
DALMACIO LIM, JR., *ADMIRAL TRANS., IMBOA*
AUDIE BECERIO, *PAMANA TRANSIT*
A. BAYOT, *LORNA EXPRESS*
GOLDENJB-WAY TRANS, NEMBOG
EMIL PAJARILLO, *PVP LINER, NEMBOG*
C. MAHILAC, *JOANA - JESH TRANS, IMBOA*
B. PASCUAL, *Pascual Liner, MMBOA*
ALEXANDER LIM, *COMMUTER BUS CORP., IMBOA*
CARMELO LAGURA, *ROYAL TRANS, IMBOA*
ARMI URBANO, *FYTI BUS CO., NEMBOG*

ADVT

METRO BRIEFS

3 robbers killed

THREE of five armed men who held up a gas station in Quezon City on Saturday were killed in a shootout with policemen. Supt. George Dadulo identified the three suspects as Victor Pamos, Odelon Manzano and Eldrid Caparida, all residents of Pandacan, Manila. The three barged into the Cat-Gas gasoline station on Visayas Avenue, Barangay Tandang Sora early morning Saturday and at gunpoint, took P6,000 from the cashier. One of the gas station employees, however, alerted policemen who were in the area. The suspects fled on board a taxi cab and a motorcycle, firing shots at the policemen until three of them dropped dead on Congressional Avenue, near Jupiter Street. The other suspects, however, managed to escape with the loot.
Nancy C. Carvajal

HERNANDEZ

Boy needs P4,000

JOHN Jerico N. Hernandez will be celebrating his sixth birthday on Aug. 11. His wish, according to his mother, Lolita, is to walk normally. Doctors at the Philippine General Hospital say John is suffering from speech delay, profound hearing loss and protein energy malnutrition. In addition, he has been diagnosed with global developmental delay which has left him unable to walk on his own. He needs a bilateral HKAFO which will support his hip and help him walk without aid. The family, however, does not have the P4,000 needed to buy the equipment as Lolita's only source of income is vending food in front of their house in Sta. Cruz, Manila. Those who want to help John can call his mother at 0920-5318101 or deposit money into the account of Lolita's niece, Yuria N. Abe, account number 610110005583 at the Banco Filipino Tayuman branch.

Two . . .

From page A27

thus, it was important to build trust between the two.

If, for instance, a person calls him up in the middle of the night about an abduction case, "his reaction would be different if I sent him a major, instead of a sergeant," he said.

"Now, imagine, if instead of sending my men to help him, I take his case instead. It would have such an impact. He'll know how important I consider his case to be and he'll try his best to help me," Iglesia said.

There is also a chance, he said, that the person's perception of a policeman would change completely.

"Many people think negatively of the police because of the actions of a few," he said. "But in reality, it takes only one good deed from a police officer to change a person's view about the entire police force."

TO ALL GOOD FILIPINOS: THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING the IRR of the MILK CODE!

"In our personal capacity, and for the good of the nation and our children, we support the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations of EO 51, the National Milk Code, and pertinent International Commitments. Our obligation to our children and their future is paramount and imperative." **A Statement made by the following:**

Our TOP National Leaders:

RAMOS, Fidel V., Ex-President of the Philippines
DAVIDE, Hilario, Ex-Chief Justice, Supreme Court
VELARDE, Bro. Mike, El Shaddai Leader
PARDO, Bernardo P., Ex. Justice, Supreme Court
SALONGA, Jovito R., Ex –Senator,
CHAVEZ, Francisco, Ex-Solicitor General
COJUANGCO, Gretchen O., Philanthropist
CONCEPCION, Raul, Price Watch,
GATMAITAN, Antonio, Banker, Farmer
GOCO, Raul, Ambassador, UN Jurist, Ex-Solicitor General
HERMANO, Ramon, Ex-Regional Director, UNICEF
REGINO, Teodoro R., Pres. Retired Appellate Justices
ALVAREZ, Heherson, Ex-Senator, Ex- DENR Sec.
TAÑADA, Wigberto, Ex-Senator, President, PRRM
ROMULO, Alberto, Secretary of Foreign Affairs
LICHAUCO, Atty. Josefina T., Ex-DTC Secretary
PARDO DE TAVERA, Mita, Ex-DSWD Secretary
ARENAS, Rosemarie "Baby" - Philanthropist
CACHO, Jose Antonio, Businessman
VERZOSA, Sister Pilar, PRO-LIFE
REUTER, James B., SJ, Priest, Catholic Media
HENARES, Hilarion Jr. M., Presidential Consultant
MARAMBA, Felix K., Ex. President, PCCI
ECHAUZ, Lydia B., President, Far Eastern University
LEDESMA, Fortune, Diplomatic Corps, Business Woman
ROBLES, Rex, Commodore retired, activist
YAN, Sonny, Brigadier General retired
ESGUERRA, Elvira I. Henares, MD, FPDS, RPh, IBCLC
CASTILLO, Nona D. Andaya, IBCLC
LUNA, Attorney Ipat

Journalists And Broadcasters

GUERRERO NAKPIL, Carmen, Malaya
ARANETA, Gemma Cruz., Writer, Broadcaster
HARPER, Anna, Philippine Daily Inquirer
HECHANOVA-CONCIO, Conchita, Writer
GUERRERO, Amadis Ma., Writer
SAN JUAN, Eric, Writer
OROSA, Ramon, Writer, Businessman, Evangelist
OROSA, Rosalinda L., Journalist, Philippine Star
OROSA, Rose, Writer
TABUÑAR, Gabby, Broadcast Journalist
SORIANO, Adoracion, Writer
SEÑERES, Roy, Writer
PADILLA, Felix, Writer

UCCP, Cosmopolitan Church
(Umbrella organization of mainline Protestants)

SALONGA, Lydia B. Elder,
SALONGA, Steve B. Chair, Church Council
SALONGA, Eduardo B. Chair, Board of Trustees
LABOG, Coralie Divinagracia, Chair, Board of Deacons
SALONGA, Imelda H.Member, Board of Deacons
MORALES, Bernadette Amistoso, Pastor
SOLEDAD, Bing, Elder
GAMBOA, Melquiades Jr., Elder,
CEORUSAO, Gerry V., Elder

BUDDHIST
Universal Wisdom Foundation

SHERPA, LAMA, monk from Tibet
RIMPOCHE, Samten, monk from Tibet
MANSUKHANI, Ram, President,
TAN-MANSUKHANI, Seann,, Asst. Professor, DLSU
COROTAN, Benajmin, Professor
AUREUS, Carlos Vice-President,
CABUANG, Prof. Fred, Past President,
YUPITON, MARK
HARTIGAN-GO, Mary
GORTEGA, Josephine
SANTIAGO, Nela, Director, HILOM
YUPITON, Mariano

This is a part of 560 signatures by doctors, lawyers, 80 NGOs, mothers and Filipinos from all walks of life in support of the revised IRR.

GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS

CERTIFICATE

The most women breast feeding simultaneously was 3,541 at an event organised by Children for Breastfeeding Inc., and the City of Manila in partnership with Nurturers of the Earth Inc., UNICEF and the Department of Health of the Republic of the Philippines at the San Andres Sports Complex and Cultural Center, Malate, Manila, Philippines on 4 May 2006

GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS LTD

20 out of 23 Senators:

DRILON, Franklin M., Senate President
FLAVIER, Juan M., President Pro Tempore
PANGILINAN, Francis N., Majority Floor Leader.
PIMENTEL, Aquilino, Minority Floor Leader
ANGARA, Edgardo J., Senator of the Republic
ARROYO, Joker, Senator of the Republic
BIAZON, Rodolfo G., Senator of the Republic
ENRILE, Juan Ponce, Senator of the Republic
ESTRADA, Jinggoy E., Senator of the Republic
ESTRADA, Loi E., Senator of the Republic
LAPID, Manuel "Lito" Senator of the Republic
LIM, Alfredo S., Senator of the Republic
MADRIGAL, Jamby, Senator of the Republic
MAGSAYSAY, Ramon Jr., Senator of the Republic
OSMEÑA, Sergio III, Senator of the Republic
RECTO, Ralph G., Senator of the Republic
REVILLA, Ramon, Jr., Senator of the Republic
ROXAS, Mar, Senator of the Republic
SANTIAGO, Miriam D., Senator of the Republic
VILLAR, Manuel, Senator of the Republic

Entire Catholic Bishops Conference

CAPPALA, Fernando,Archbishop Davao, exPresident
LAGDAMEO, Angel, Archbishop Cebu, President
ANICETO, Aniceto B., Archbishop Pampanga
TALAMAYAN, Diosdado, Archbishop Tuguegarao
LAMPON, Angelito, Bishop of Jolo
ONGTIOCO, Honesto, Bishop of Cubao
REYES, Gabriel, Bishop of Antipolo
NAVARRA, Vicente, Bishop of Bacolod
ODCHIMAR, Nereo, Bishop of Surigao
PALMA, Jose, Bishop of Catbalogan
LEDESMA, Antonio, Bishop of Ipil
DEOGRACIAS, Iniguez, Bishop of Caloocan
CENZON, Carlito, Bishop of Baguio
DU, John, Bishop of Dumaguete
BAYLON, Joel, Bishop of Masbate
CORONEL, Hernando, Secretary General
FIGURA, Juanito, Asst. Secretary General

.... exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, and continued breastfeeding up to two years and beyond, with nutritionally adequate and safe complementary feeding through the introduction of indigenous foodstuffs and local foods

What is the scope of EO 51 and the new IRR?? Do they cover only "infants from 0-6 months," as the Milk Companies claim? "Scope of the Code" in Section 3 of EO51:

"The Code applies to the marketing, and practices related thereto, of the following products: breastmilk substitutes, including infant formula; other milk products, foods and beverages, including bottle-fed complementary foods, when marketed or otherwise represented to be suitable, with or without modification, for use as a partial or total replacement of breast-milk; feeding bottles and teats. It also applies to their quality and availability, and to information concerning their use."

If the Scope is limited to infant formula only, then the wording should be "**limited to** infant formula," not "**including** infant formula," as it is presently worded. Hence the provision of the Code that actually specifies the products that fall under its jurisdiction does not limit it to products for infants below the age of 6 months. This provision covers **any type of breastmilk substitute** i.e. any product which is marketed or otherwise represented as a partial or total replacement for breastmilk, whether suitable or not for that purpose, **whether it is for infants 0-6 months, or for babies up to two years or beyond.**.

If it is good enough for Baby Jesus, It is good enough for your baby.

Photo by Philippine Daily Inquirer/Ren Zamora

Our heartfelt thanks to the Supreme Court for denying a Temporary Restraining Order to the milk companies. 30% of the family income is spent on formula milk. Breastfeeding is the most far-reaching and the least costly strategy for the alleviation of poverty. This is an issue between the health of Filipino babies and profits of predatory commercial interest – between PUBLIC WELFARE AND PRIVATE INTEREST. Exclusive Breastfeeding in the first 6 months of life has been down to 26 percent in the Philippines (as against 40 percent in India) and in Metro Manila area, where formula milk advertising is most felt, down to disastrous ½ percent of nursing mothers, with an average of 24 days, instead of six months and sustained breastfeeding beyond two years as recommended by the WHO. For 20 frustrating years violations of EO 51 were rife because no new Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) were issued to give teeth to the law. Now in 2006 after 11 draft versions and 20 frustrating years after EO 51 was signed into law in 1986, the 12th version of new IRR was finally approved. The strategy of the Milk Companies is to get the court to issue a Temporary Restraining Order to delay the implementation of the IRR for years while the issues are being adjudicated.

76 Congressmen, the best of them

SALAPUDDIN, Gerry A.Deputy Speaker
AQUINO, Benigno III, Deputy Speaker
DEL MAR, Raul, Deputy Speaker
ABAYON, Harlin C., Northern Samar, LP
AGUJA, Mario Joyo, Party List, AKBAYAN
ALFELOR, Felix R., Camarines Sur, LAKAS
ALVAREZ, Antonio, Palawan, KAMPI
ANTONINO, Rodolfo, Nueva Ecija, KAMPI
AQUINO, Agapito, Makati City, LPD
ARROYO, Mikey, Pampanga, LAKAS-CMD
BARAQUEL, Ana T. Hontiveros, AKBAYAN
BELTRAN, Crispin, Party List, ANAKPAWIS
BONDOC, Anna York, Pampanga, LAKAS
CAJES, Roberto, Bohol, LAKAS-CMD
CARMONA, Tranquilino, Negros Occ., KAMPI
CASTRO, Fred H., Capiz, LP
CERILLES, Antonio, Zamboanga del Sur, NPC
CRISOLOGO, Vicente BingBong, QC, KNP-LDP
CUA, Guillermo P. Party List COOP NATCO
DADIVAS, Rodriguez, Capiz, LP
DAZA, Nanette Castelo, QC, LAKAS-CMD
DEFENSOR, Arthur D., Iloilo, LAKAS-CMD
DURANO, Red, Cebu, NPC
ESPINOSA, Edgar, Guimaras, LAKAS CMP
FALCON, Jed, Surigao del Sur, KAMPI
FUA, Orlando J. Siquijor, LAKAS- CMD
GARIN, Janette L., Iloilo, LAKAS-CMD
GOLEZ, Roilo, Parañaque, LAKAS-K4
GOZOS, Oscar L., Batangas, KAMPI
GUZMAN, Del R. de, Marikina, LAKAS
JARAULA, Constantino G., Cagayan de Oro, LAKAS
JAWORSKI, Robert, LAKAS-CMD
KINTANAR, Simeon, Cebu, NPC
LACSON, Carlos, Negros Occidental, LAKAS
LAGMAN, Edcel C., Albay, AKSYON
LIBANAN, Jesli A., Eastern Samar
MACIAS, Emilio C., Negros Occidental, NPC
MAGSAYSAY, Eulogio R., Party List, AVE
MAGSAYSAY, Mitos H., Zambales, LAKAS
MANDANAS, Hermilando "Dodo" , Batangas, LP
MARAÑON, Alfredo, Negros Occ.I, KAMPI
MARCOS, Imee, Ilocos Norte, KBL
MARIANO, Rafael V., ANAK-PAWIS
MAZA, LIZA L., GABRIELA
MIRAFLORES, Florencio T., Aklan, LP
MIRANDA, Anthony, Isabela, KAMPI
MITRA, Abraham B., Palawan, LP
NANTES, Raffy, Quezon, LP
OCAMPO, Satur, Bayan Muna
ORTEGA, Manuel, La Union, NPC
PABLO, Ernesto C., APEC
PICHAY, Prospero A., Surigao del Sur, Lakas-CMD
REYES, Enmund O., Marinduque, LAKAS
ROMAN, Antonino P., Bataan, LP
ROSALES, Loretta Ann P., AKBAYAN
SEÑERES, Hans Christian, BUHAY
SOLIS, Joey, Sorsogon, LAKAS
SUMULONG, Victor, LAKAS-CMD
SY-ALVARADO, Wilhelmino M., Bulacan, LAKAS
TAÑADA, Lorenzo III, Quezon, LP
UMALI, Alfonso V., Jr., Oriental Mindoro, LP
UNICO, Renato J., Camarines Norte, KAMPI
VALDEZ, Edgar L., APEC
VALENCIA, Rod G., Oriental Mindoro
VELARDE, Rene DM, BUHAY
VILLAFUERTE, Luis R., Camarines Sur, KAMPI
WACNANG, Laurence, Kalinga, LP
YAPHA, Antonio Jr., Cebu, NPC
ZAMORA, Ronaldo B., San Juan, PMP
ZIALCITA, Eduardo, Parañaque, LAKAS-CMD
ZUBIRI, Juan Miguel, Bukidnon, LAKAS

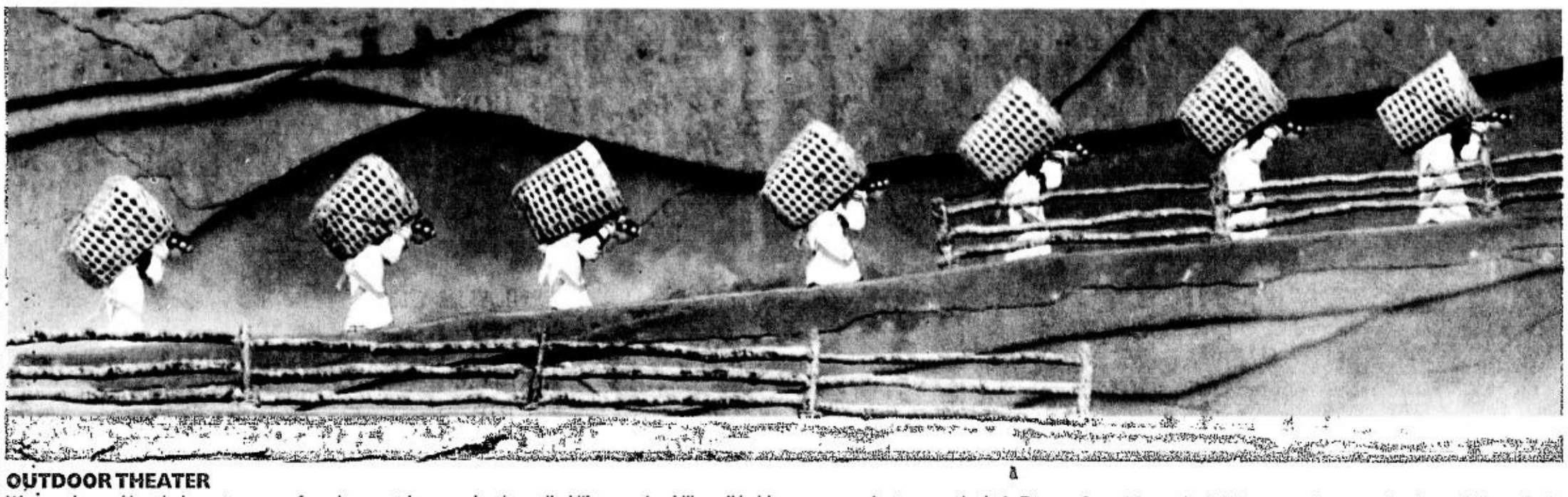
Layout approved by Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, October 21, 2005

Special thanks to Mayor Lito Atienza and the mothers of Manila who broke the Guinness World Record, to SM Supermalls for being the first breastfeeding-friendly mall in the Philippines, to UNICEF and the Department of Health for their full support and cooperation.

Children for Breastfeeding, Inc.

Please e-mail your support,your comments and the monitoring of company violations to:
ibclcphil@yahoo.com
children_for_breastfeeding@yahoo.com

ADVT.



OUTDOOR THEATER
Women dressed in ethnic costumes perform in an outdoor production called "Impression Lijiang," held on a manmade stage on the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, 3,100 meters above sea level, near Lijiang city in China's Yunnan province July 23. About 500 amateur performers from 10 ethnic minority groups took part in the $31-million production by acclaimed Chinese director Zhang Yimou. REUTERS

Car bomb blasts in Baghdad, Kirkuk kill 60

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—BOMBS EXploded Sunday in Baghdad and the northern oil center of Kirkuk, killing nearly 60 people, police said, and dramatically escalating tension as the prime minister left for Washington for talks on reversing the country's slide toward civil war.

The blasts occurred as Iraqi forces and the US-led coalition mounted a major crackdown on the country's most feared Shiite militia, the Mahdi Army, blamed by Sunnis for many of the sectarian kidnappings and killings which threaten to tear the country apart.

The Baghdad bombing occurred when a suicide driver detonated a minivan in the Mahdi Army stronghold of Sadr City at the entrance to the Jameelah market, packed with shoppers and vendors on the first day of the Iraqi work week.

An Iraqi army statement said 34 people were killed and 73 were wounded. Eight more people were killed and 20 wounded when a second bomb exploded two hours later at a municipal government building in Sadr City, the Iraqi army said.

In Kirkuk, a car bomb detonated at midday near a courthouse in the city market district, killing 17 and wounding 30, according to police Brig. Gen. Sarhat Qadir. It was the fourth car bombing this month in Kirkuk, where tensions are rising among Arabs, Kurds and Turkomen for control of the area's vast oil wealth.

The wave of bombings, shootings and sectarian killings has plunged Iraq's new unity government into a deep crisis only two months after Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki took office, pledging to pursue national reconciliation and to pave the way for a US military withdrawal.

Instead, the US military is planning to bolster its forces in Baghdad to cope with the security crisis.

Al-Maliki and a large delegation left Sunday for Washington, where he will meet President George W. Bush on Tuesday. Security is expected to dominate the talks.

In Sadr City, dazed and angry people milled about the car bombing site, many of them still reeling from the effects of an early morning raid against what the US military described as "death squad" members.

"We could not sleep because of the raid, and today we woke up with the explosion of the car bomb," one man told Associated Press Television without giving his name. "How long is it going to be like this?" *AP*

Is heat wave in Europe, US climate change?

By Robin Pomeroy

ROME—AS LARGE PARTS OF EUrope and North America once again bake in an exceptionally hot summer, many people are asking what has now become a perennial question: "Is this global warming?"

The heat has already killed at least 21 people in France, including a 15-month-old baby, prompting fears of a repeat of the European heat wave in 2003 in which at least 15,000 people in France and 20,000 in Italy died.

Large parts of the United States and Canada have also seen record high temperatures this month. "We are cooking," said US meteorologist Dennis Feltgen of the National Weather Service.

Many scientists reckon the globe is warming and will continue to do so due to the "greenhouse effect" caused by emissions from fossil fuels trapping heat in the atmosphere. But they say we should not read too much into a single hot spell.

TODDLER Flor Lopez cools down outside her Sacramento, Calif., home July 22. AP

"As ever, you cannot say any one weather event is caused by global warming," said Asher Timms of Britain's Tyndall Center for Climate Change Research. "But globally, it seems that there's quite a shift in our weather patterns."

Skeptics of the global warming theory, which predicts droughts and floods this century unless greenhouse gas emissions are curbed, say the media play up hot summer days for dramatic effect.

Bill O'Keefe, a board member of Washington think tank the George C. Marshall Institute and a consultant to the oil industry, said the record heat could be seen as part of a natural cycle of highs and lows.

"I don't think there is any climatologist or meteorologist that would say you could draw a conclusion about any given year. There have been hotter periods in the past and we will have them in the future," O'Keefe told Reuters.

"If this persisted for a very long time then you might be able to conclude that human activities had an impact."

But many scientists say a warming trend is already clear.

US space agency Nasa says 2005 was the warmest globally in more than a century and that the preceding three years were also the warmest since the 1890s. *Reuters*

N. Korea's Kim takes new wife

SEOUL—NORTH KOREAN LEADER KIM Jong-il has taken a musician-turned-secretary as his new wife after his former spouse died of cancer two years ago, a report said Sunday.

Kim Ok, 42, lived with the reclusive North Korean leader who turned 64 in February after serving as his private secretary, Seoul's Yonhap news agency said quoting an unnamed government source.

"She is virtually North Korea's first lady," said the source who Yonhap called a Seoul government source privy to information on Kim Jong-il's family.

Kim Ok, a piano major at Pyongyang University of Music and Dance before becoming Kim Jong-il's secretary in the early 1980s, has since accompanied the North's leader on trips at home and abroad, the source said.

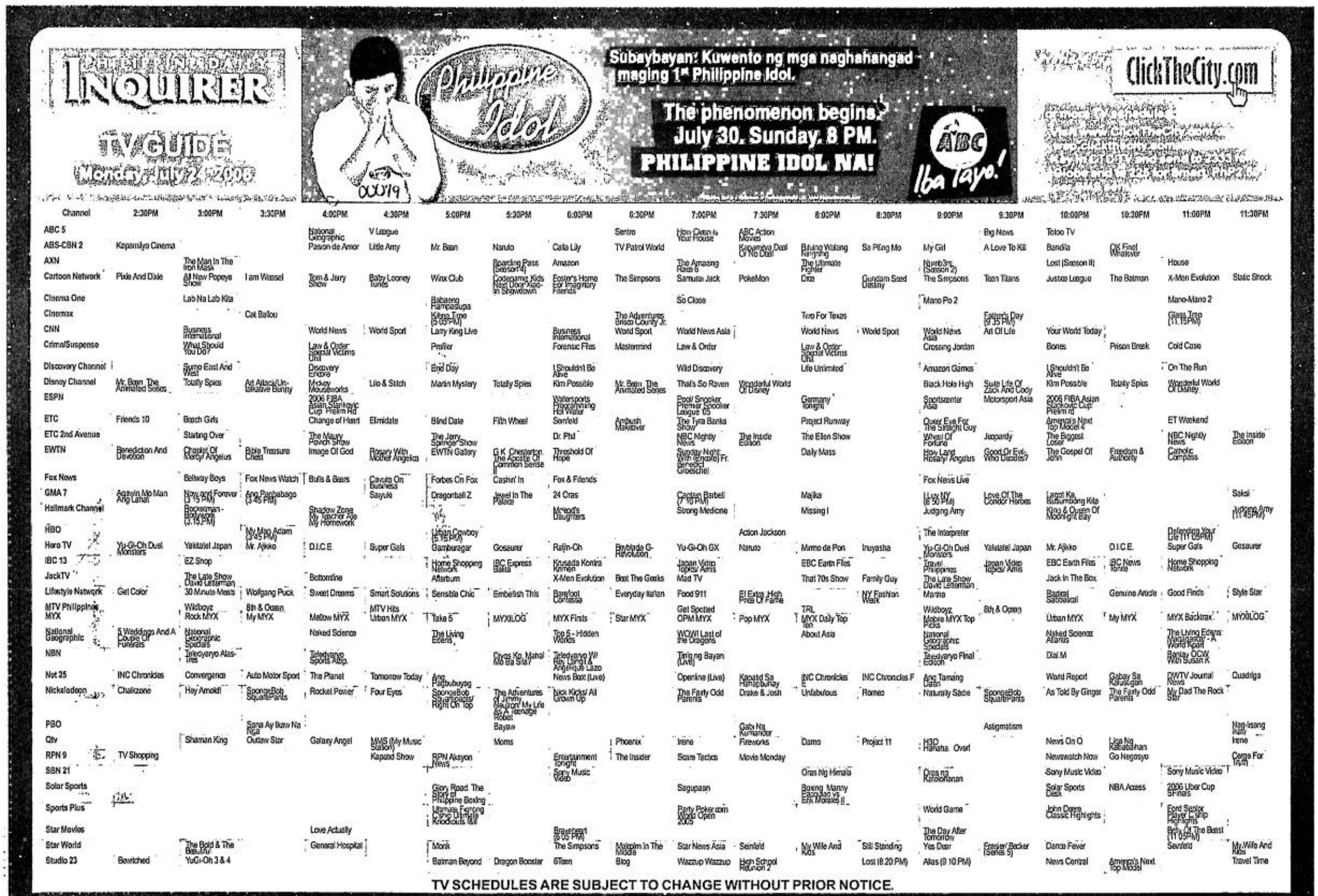
"She is a cute woman rather than a beauty," the source said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "I heard she is very wise and clever."

She visited Washington as a member of North Korea's delegation led by Jo Myong-rok, first vice chair of the National Defense Commission, in 2000 and accompanied Kim Jong-il to visit China in January, the source added.

The reclusive leader has often been described by outside media as having a playboy lifestyle of wine and women despite the chronic poverty of his people.

KIM Ok, then a member of North Korea's delegation to Washington in October 2000. AFP

Pyongyang has never made public Kim Jong-Il's marital status, but he is believed to have had three wives, South Korean and Japanese media reports said. *AFP*



Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5				National Geographic	V League				Sentro	How Clean Is Your House	ABC Action Movies				Big News	Toloo TV			
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Little Army	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Calla Lily	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Bituing Walang Ningning	Sa Piling Mo	My Girl	A Love To Kill	Bandila	OK Fine Whatever		
AXN		The Man In The Iron Mask					Boarding Pass (Season 4)	Amazon		The Amazing Race 8		The Ultimate Fighter		Numb3rs (Season 2)		Lost (Season II)		House	
Cartoon Network	Pixie And Dixie	All New Popeye Show	I am Weasel	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Wmx Club	Codename Kids Next Door:Asia-In Showdown	Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends	The Simpsons	Samurai Jack	PokeMon	Dragonball Z	Gundam Seed Destiny	The Simpsons	Teen Titans	Justice League	The Batman	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock
Cinema One		Lab Na Lab Kita				Babaeng Hampaslupa Kilimo Time (5:03PM)				So Close				Mano Po 2				Mano-Mano 2	
Cinemax			Cat Ballou						The Adventures Brisco County Jr.			Two For Texas			Father's Day (9:35 PM)			Clash Trap (11:15PM)	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	Art Of Life	Your World Today			
Crime&Suspense		What Should You Do?		Law & Order Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Mastermind	Law & Order		Law & Order Special Victims Unit		Crossing Jordan		Bones	Prison Break	Cold Case	
Discovery Channel		Sumo East And West		Discovery Empire		End Day		I Shouldn't Be Alive		Wild Discovery		Life Unlimited		Amazon Games		I Shouldn't Be Alive		On The Run	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-Talkative Bunny	Mickey Mouseworks	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Black Hole High	Suite Life Of Zack And Cody	Kim Possible	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN				2006 FIBA Asian Stankovic Cup Prelim Rd				Watersports Programming Hot Water		Pool/ Snooker Premier Snooker League 05		Germany Tonight		Sportscenter Asia	Motorsport Asia	2006 FIBA Asian Stankovic Cup Prelim rd			
ETC	Friends 10	Beach Girls		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Project Runway		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		America's Next Top Model 4		ET Weekend	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	The Biggest Loser		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	Benedicton And Devotion	Chastity Of Mary/ Angelus	Bible Treasure Chest	Image Of God	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	G.K. Chesterton The Apostle Of Common Sense II	Threshold Of Hope		Sunday Night With (Fr.)Fr. Benedict Groeschel		Daily Mass		How Land Rosary/ Angelus	Good Or Evil, Who Decides?	The Gospel Of John	Freedom & Authority	Catholic Compass	
Fox News		Beltway Boys	Fox News Watch	Bulls & Bears	Cavuto On Business	Forbes On Fox	Cashin' In	Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Ang Panbabago (3:45 PM)		Sayuki	Dragonball Z	Jewel In The Palace	24 Oras		Captain Barbell (7:10 PM)		Majika		Uay NY (8:50 PM)	Love Of The Condor Heroes	Langit Ka, Isusumbong Kita			Saksi
Hallmark Channel		Bookwoman - Bodyguard (3:15 PM)		Shadow Zone My Teacher Ate My Homework				Meredith's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Missing I		Judging Amy		King & Queen Of Moonlight Bay			Judging Amy (11:45PM)
HBO			My Man Adam (3:45 PM)			Lilian Cowboy (5:15 PM)					Action Jackson			The Interpreter				Defending Your Life (11:05PM)	
Hero TV	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Gamburagar	Gosaurer	Ralph-Ch	Beyblade G-Revolution	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Naruto	Mimmo de Pon	Inuyasha	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Gosaurer
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Krusada Kontra Krimen		Japan Video Topics/ Anns		EBC Earth Files		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Anns	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV		The Late Show David Letterman		Bottomline		Afterburn		X-Men Evolution	Beat The Geeks	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Family Guy	The Late Show David Letterman		Jack In The Box			
Lifestyle Network	Get Color	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	Embellish This	Barefoot Contessa	Everyday Italian	Food 911	El Extra: High Price Of Fame		NY Fashion Week	Martha		Radical Sabbatical	Genuine Article	Good Finds	Style Star
MTV Philippines MYX		Wildboyz Rock MYX	8th & Ocean My MYX		MTV Hits Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXILOG	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	Get Spotted OPM MYX	Pop MYX	TRL MYX Daily Top Ten		Wildboyz Mobile MYX Top Picks	8th & Ocean	Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXILOG
National Geographic	5 Weddings And A Couple Of Funerals	National Geographic Specials		Naked Science		The Living Edens		Top 5 - Hidden Worlds		WOW! Last of the Dragons		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Naked Science: Atlantis		The Living Edens: Madagascar - A World Apart	
NBN		Teleserye ng Alas-tres		Teleserye Sports Alert			Divas Ko, Mahal Ko Ba Siya?	Teleserye: Wi Kay, Lloyd & Angelique Lazo News Beat (Live)		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teleserye Final Edition		Dial M		Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Net 25	INC Chronicles	Convergence	Auto Motor Sport	The Planet	Tomorrow Today	Ang Pagbubuyag				Openline (Live)	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	INC Chronicles E	INC Chronicles F	Ang Tamang Daan		Word Report	Gabay Sa Kaluluan	PWTV Journal News	Cusdriga
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	SpongeBob SquarePants	Rocket Power	Four Eyes	SpongeBob SquarePants/ Right On Top	The Adventures of Jimmy Neutron/ My Life As A Teenage Robot	Nick Kicks/ All Grown Up		The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	Romeo	Naturally Sadie	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga				Bayaw				Gabi Na, Kumander				Astigmatism				Nag-iisang Ikaw/ Irene
Qtv		Shaman King	Outlaw Star	Galaxy Angel	MMS (My Music Station)/ Kapatid Show		Moms		Phoenix	Irene	Fireworks	Damo	Project 11	H3D Hahaha, Over!		News On Q	Usa Ng Kababaihan		Cerga For Truth
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Star Movies				Love Actually				Braveheart (8:05 PM)						The Day After Tomorrow				Beh, Of The Beast (11:05PM)	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Monk		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	My Wife And Kids	Still Standing	Yes Dear	Frasier/ Becker (Series 5)	Dance Fever		Seinfeld	My Wife And Kids
Studio 23	Bewitched	YuGi-Oh 3 & 4				Batman Beyond	Dragon Booster	6Teen	Blog	Wazzup Wazzup	High School Reunion 2		Lost (8:20 PM)	Alias (9:10 PM)		News Central	America's Next Top Model		Travel Time

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Reluctant Bush may need Syria to end Lebanon war

BEIRUT—US PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH may have to set aside his hostility to Syria if he wants its help in ending the war between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Syria has offered to play a constructive role, but there is no sign the Bush administration is ready to turn to a country it accuses of sponsoring terrorism and helping insurgents in Iraq—or to pay the price the Syrians would try to extract.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice starts a mission to the region on Sunday, but will not talk directly to key players such as Syria, let alone Hezbollah or its founding patron Iran.

Bush again criticized Damascus and Tehran on the eve of her trip, saying their actions "threaten the entire Middle East."

The United States, willing for now to let Israel keep up its assault in Lebanon, says no ceasefire will last unless it is part of overall arrangements that will prevent Hezbollah from menacing Israel with rockets and cross-border attacks.

But unless the Israeli army can crush Hezbollah—a goal that has eluded it in nearly two weeks of bombing—it is hard to imagine how outside powers can negotiate a complex deal to change the status quo in south Lebanon without Syria's consent.

Any such initiative would also have to take account of the Shiite Islamist group's sponsors in Iran, whose nuclear dispute with the West might not incline it toward cooperation.

For now, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad can bide his time, hoping for Washington to seek his help and reasonably confident that Israel will not expand its Lebanon war to Syrian soil.

"Now the political environment is conducive to deal-making, but if the Syrians are asked to intervene with Hezbollah, they would expect a political gain," said Murhaf Jouejati, a scholar at the Middle East Institute in Washington.

Syria would be looking at least to rebuild its bruised influence as a regional actor and end its diplomatic isolation.

Bush indirectly acknowledged Syria's importance when he told British Prime Minister Tony Blair in an aside last week that the key was to "get Syria to get Hezbollah to stop doing this shit."

Engaging Syria in diplomacy would be hard to stomach for Bush, who with French President Jacques Chirac led international pressure to isolate Damascus and force it to end its 29-year military presence in Lebanon after the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri in February 2005.

But if he wants a durable solution to the deadly conflict in Lebanon, Bush may have scant choice, even if he saves face by relying on UN or Arab emissaries to get Syria on board.

BROKEN pieces of glass adorn an Islamic crescent after an Israeli air raid hit a mosque in the Lebanese city of Sidon July 23. AFP

"So far Israel has not regained its soldiers, wiped out Hezbollah or turned the Lebanese against the guerrillas, but it cannot stop the war without achieving anything," said Nadim Shehadi, an analyst at London's Chatham House think tank.

"Hezbollah has shown again that Israel's military is not invincible and Israel can be vulnerable," he said. "It has also shown the Lebanese that the outside world won't help them."

Syria may have influence, but with Hezbollah's prestige soaring across the Arab world, it is not clear how amenable the group would be to Assad's wishes in any diplomatic end-game.

Syrian political commentator Sami Moubayed said Hezbollah had become more independent of Syria since Israel's pullout from Lebanon in 2000. It had also been strengthened by last year's election of hardline Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"They still confer with the Syrians, seek their advice and coordinate with Syria but they do not take orders, money or arms from Damascus," Moubayed said. *Reuters*

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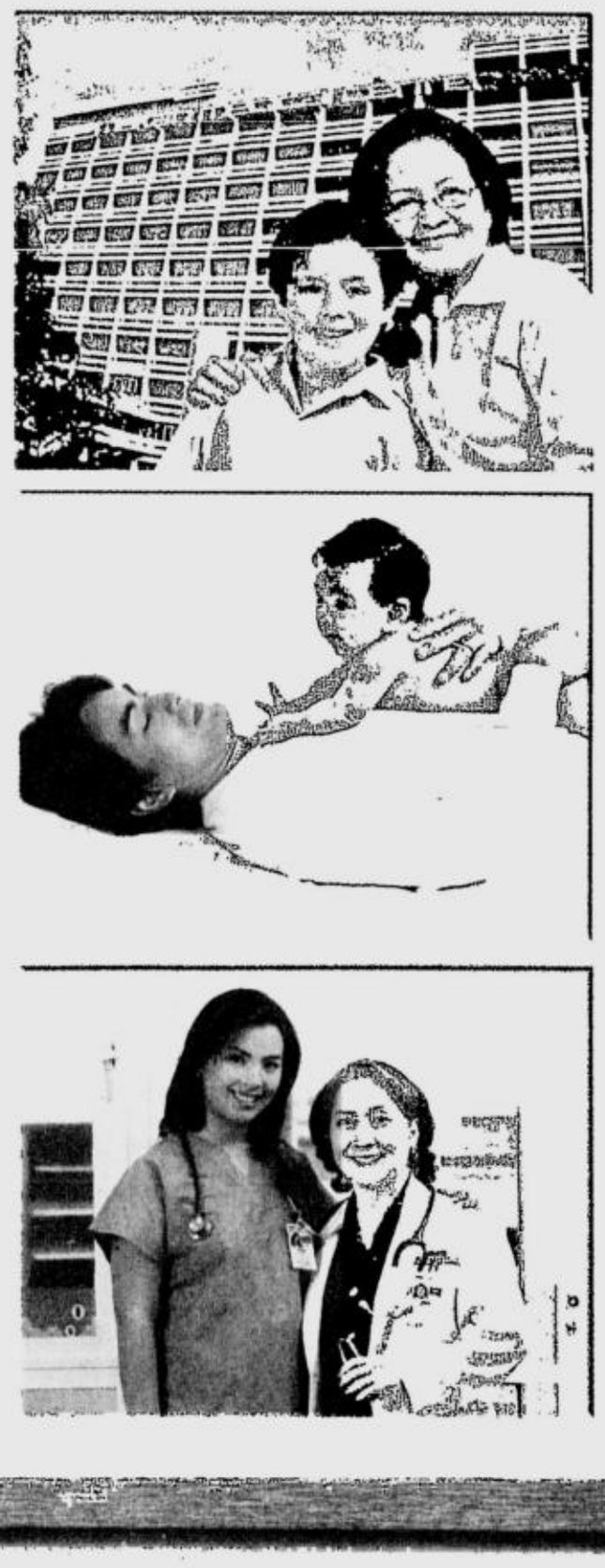

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, JULY 24, 2006

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

INVOKING God for war—An Israeli soldier prays next to the shells of his mobile artillery unit close to the Israel-Lebanon border, July 23. REUTERS

Israel punches into south Lebanon as civilians flee

TYRE, LEBANON—ISRAELI WARPLANES BLITZED SOUTHERN AND eastern Lebanon on Sunday after troops in tanks and armored cars punched across the border and seized a village, intensifying the war on Hezbollah despite mounting concern over the plight of civilians.

Top diplomats from France, Germany and Britain are heading to the region for talks on the Lebanon crisis ahead of a visit by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who continues to reject ceasefire calls as a "false promise."

In a wave of pre-dawn raids, fighter-bombers for the first time struck directly inside the main southern city of Sidon, where tens of thousands of Lebanese have sought refuge from the relentless Israeli offensive.

A three-story building housing a Hezbollah religious center was hit.

Israel also targeted Hezbollah's power base in Beirut's Shiite-dominated southern suburbs, and struck factories, roads and bridges in air strikes in the eastern Baalbek region as well as the south.

Streams of people, many waving white flags, are making a desperate trek from southern Lebanon after Israel ordered them to leave their homes, raising fears of a large-scale ground invasion.

More than 350 people have been killed in Israel's massive blitz against Lebanon which was launched after the capture of two soldiers by guerrillas from the Shiite Muslim group in a deadly border attack on July 12.

About 35 Israelis have died in the fighting.

As international efforts to end the 12-day conflict gathered pace, there was growing criticism of Israel's offensive, which has left Lebanon virtually cut off from the world, left hundreds of thousands refugees in their own country and destroyed billions of dollars of infrastructure.

"The whole thing has to stop. It's no natural disaster but a man-made crisis. This is a senseless war. It should never have started. It should never have been carried out like it is now," UN relief coordinator Jan Egeland said before heading to Lebanon.

But the White House said Saturday it was keeping to its policy on backing Israel's right to self-defense, as Rice prepared Sunday to leave for the region where she is expected to hold talks with Israeli and Palestinian leaders.

"We are keeping to our adopted position. Israel has the right to defend herself," a White House spokesperson told AFP.

Packed into tanks, bulldozers and armored cars, Israeli troops cut across the border near the town of Avivim Saturday in what the army said was another "pinpoint operation" against Shiite Muslim guerrillas.

Gen. Beni Gantz said Israeli air and ground forces "have more or less completed taking over the village of Marun Al-Ras," close to the Israeli border and strategically located 911 meters above sea level.

He said Hezbollah forces sustained "many casualties after fierce fighting that lasted a long time."

Lebanese security forces said Israeli and Hezbollah forces were engaged in street battles in the village, where four Israeli soldiers and several Hezbollah militiamen have been killed in fighting in recent days.

Israel has called up thousands of reservists and massed troops along its northern border, with Justice Minister Haim Ramon saying the aim of the offensive was to keep Hezbollah forces at least 20 kilometers from the frontier.

"For Israel, there are no longer civilians in southern Lebanon," Ramon warned. "We want to uproot Hezbollah but in a prudent manner to prevent losses."

He said however that the current offensive would not match Israel's magnitude of the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, which left about 20,000 people dead.

On Saturday, Israel pounded television transmission towns and mobile telephone masts in raids across the country that left five dead.

"The Israelis are looking to destroy sound and image in Lebanon—the last weapons this country has—after bombarding infrastructure," Telecommunications Minister Marwan Hamadeh said.

As tit-for-tat strikes continued, Hezbollah militants kept up a defiant stream of rockets onto northern Israel, with police there saying 80 Katyusha rockets landed on Saturday, lightly wounding two people in Carmiel.

Britain's junior foreign office minister Kim Howells made London's most unequivocal criticism yet of Israel's offensive, in stark contrast to the line taken by Washington and his own prime minister. *AFP*

EVACUEES from Lebanon arriving at the port of Mersin, Turkey, July 23. AP

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SPORTS

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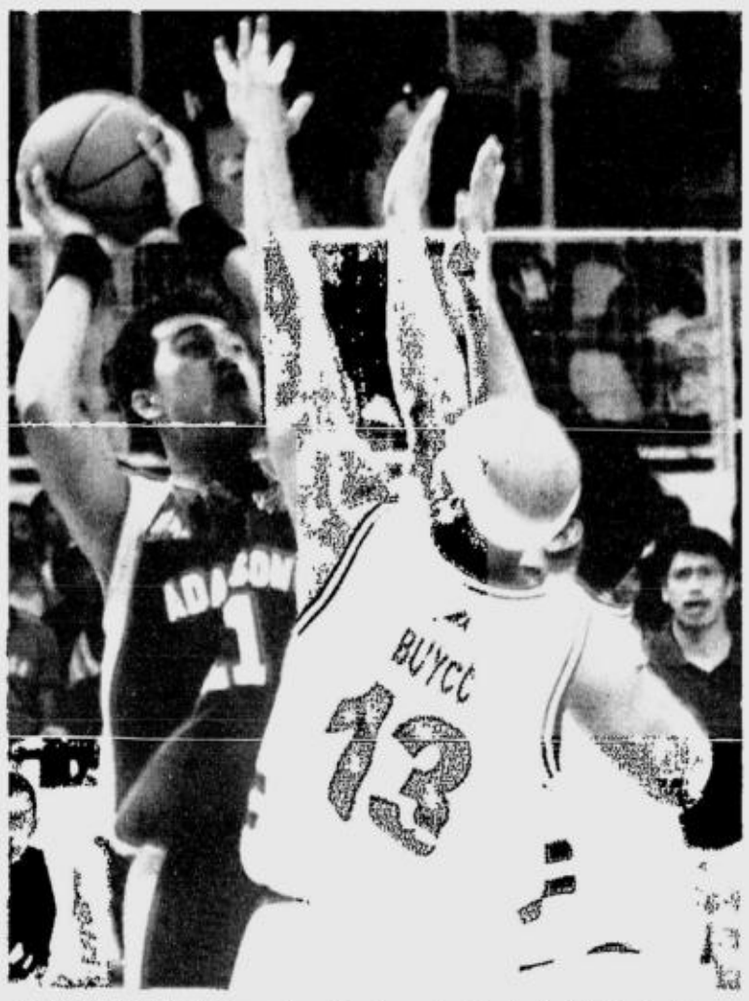

ADAMSON'S Roel Hugnatan tries to unload a shot off UP's Ira Buyco and another Maroon in yesterday's hotly-contested game. RYAN LIM

Tigers trip Warriors; Falcons nip Maroons

By Jasmine W. Payo

SANTO TOMAS IS PROVING to be a serious contender in the young UAAP men's basketball season.

Three days after upsetting defending champion Far Eastern Tamaraws, the UST Tigers stunned University of the East's title-favorite Warriors, 91-77, yesterday at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

The Tigers pulled away with a dominating second quarter behind veteran guard Jojo Duncil and rookie center Jervy Cruz then easily rode out the Warriors' repeated rallies in the second half.

"We weren't in the forecast in the pre-season, we were just (ranked) sixth or seventh," said UST coach Pido Jarencio. "We're ready every time. We were more aggressive (than UE). We were more hungry for a win."

The Warriors, who just couldn't dig themselves out of the early huge deficit, joined the Tigers in second place at 2-1 behind solo leader Ateneo Blue Eagles at 3-0.

GAMES THURSDAY
(Ninoy Aquino Stadium)
2 p.m.—NU vs UE
4 p.m.—Ateneo vs FEU

Earlier, the Adamson starters came through in the clutch to lead the Falcons past the University of the Philippines Maroons, 85-83.

The Falcons, fresh off a crushing 73-72 loss to Ateneo, seemed headed for another heartbreak after rookie Woody Co buried a triple that pushed the Maroons on top, 77-78, with 36.8 ticks left.

But senior guard Patrick Cabahug responded with a clutch basket plus two more free throws in the closing seconds to clinch the second win in four games for Adamson.

Duncil led the Tigers with a career-matching 25 points on an impressive 69 percent shooting while Cruz shot 15 of his 22 markers in the first half on top of 10 rebounds.

The two teamed up for 20 points in the Tigers' pivotal second-quarter charge that boosted the Tigers ahead by as much as 21 points, 47-26.

Despite early foul trouble, beefy Adamson center Ken Bono dominated the shaded area and shot a game-high 22 markers.

The Maroons, who dropped to 1-2, still had enough time to salvage the game after Hugnatan's jumper, but they turned the ball over when veteran Marvin Cruz was called for a backing foul with only 20.8 seconds remaining.

The scores:

First Game (Srs)

ADAMSON 85—Bono 22, Cabahug 18, Yong 15, Hugnatan 12, Canuday 8, Poloyapoy 7, Santos 2, Orera 1, Pacheco 0, Gonzalgo 0, Basilio 0, Agustin 0.

UP 83—De Asis 19, Cruz 14, Co 12, Reyes 9, Serios 8, Epres 8, David 6, Buyco 5, Braganza 2, Cacha 0, Sorongon 0.

Quarters: 23-32, 45-49, 66-66, 85-83

Second Game

UST 91—Duncil 25, Cruz 22, Cuan 12, Espiritu 10, Evangelista 7, Cortez 6, Ababou 4, Allera 3, Cantas 2, Gile 0, Taylor 0.

UE 77—Arellano 21, Custodio 17, Espiritu 10, Labagala 8, Borboran 8, Thiele 6, Canizares 5, Gregorio 2, Linganay 0, Llagas 0, Bandaying 0, Martinez 0.

Quarters: 16-18, 47-28, 71-60, 91-77

Ginebra sticks with vets

By June Navarro

WITHOUT A FIRST-ROUND PICK IN THE draft, Barangay Ginebra will be leaning heavily on its reliable veterans in the next Philippine Basketball Association season.

The Gin Kings have retained the services of Rodney Santos, Andy Seigle, Sunday Salvacion and Mark Macapagal, although details of their new contracts were not revealed.

An INQUIRER source said the 6-foot-8 Seigle and Santos, known as the Kings' fourth-quarter man, will stay with Ginebra for the next two seasons.

With the surplus of players in the free-agent market, a two-year pact is considered long enough.

Playmaker Egay Echavez, slotman Manny Ramos and 6-foot-5 sniper Allan Salansang also have expiring contracts and team sources said their performance in the just-concluded PBA Philippine Cup are still under review.

Coach Siot Tanquingcen and the Kings were supposed to select fifth overall in the coming PBA Draft on Aug. 20 but gave up their draft rights to Sta. Lucia Realty following a three-way trade that gave them Santos and Seigle from Purefoods.

"I want a healthy team next season," said Tanquingcen, who won back-to-back championships before the Kings' performance suddenly dipped last season due to injuries.

Santos and Seigle had gone through the knife to treat knee injuries they suffered in the last Fiesta Cup.

Rommel Adducul's surgery on his heel bone compounded matters for the Gin Kings while the on-and-off Jayjay Helterbrand seriously strained his calf muscle. Mark Caguioa, last conference's top scorer, also complained of a hurting knee.

Tanquingcen said Seigle will be ready next conference while Adducul has already started therapy on his right leg.

"My doctors said it's healing fast," said Adducul.

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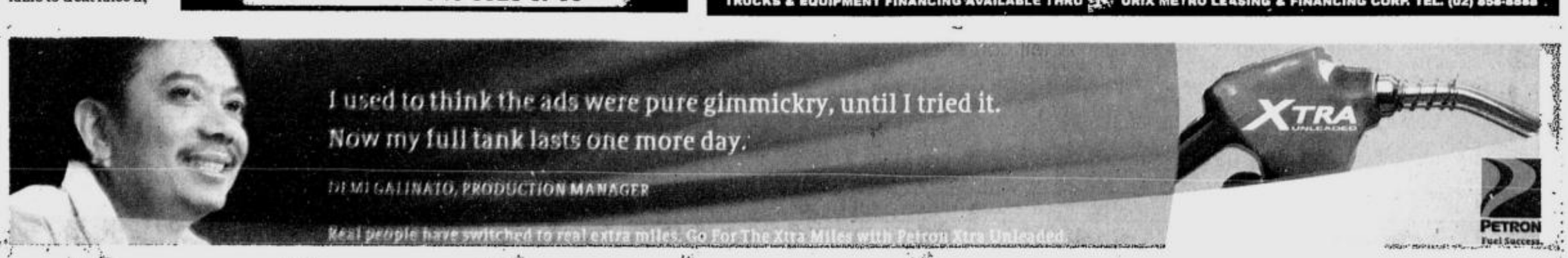


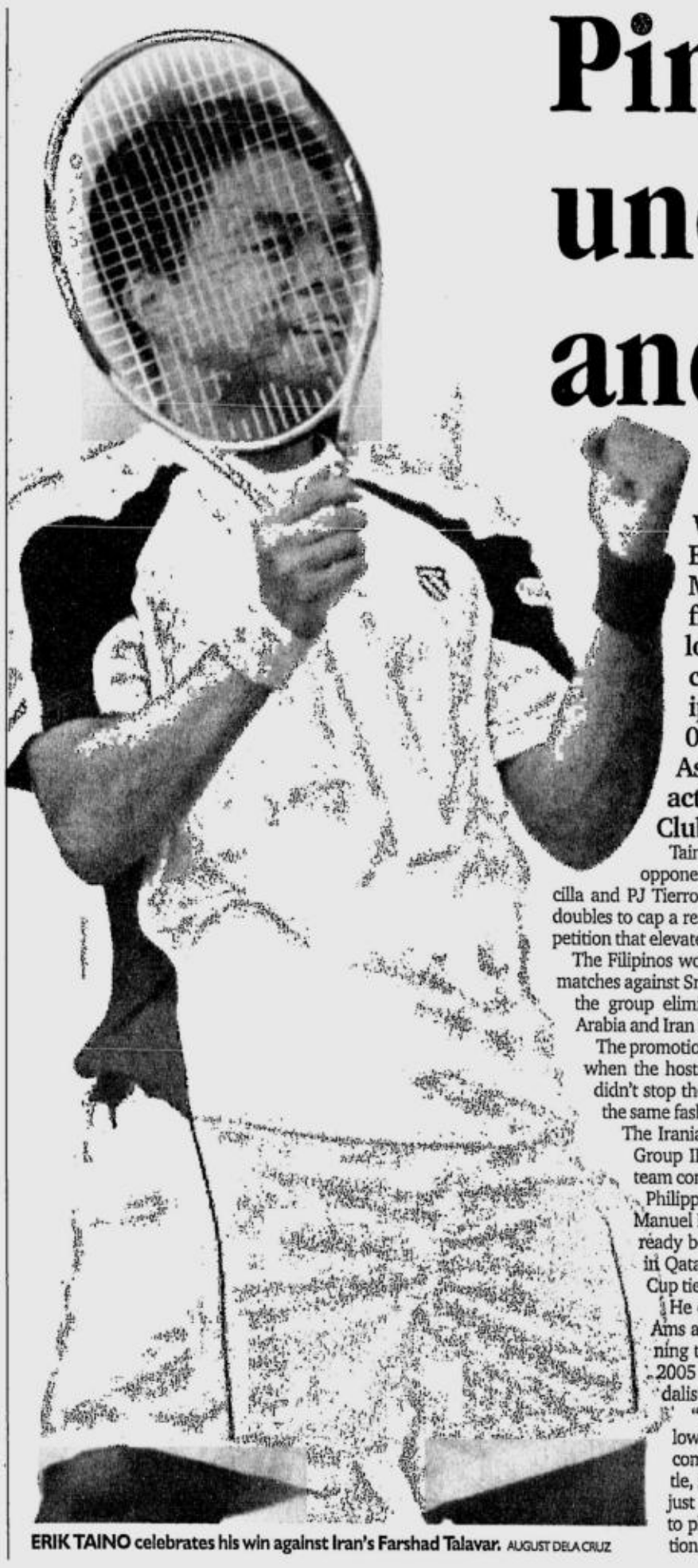
Sportswatch

Crack RP judo squad set for Vietnam stint

A CRACK 11-MAN SQUAD LED BY THE multitled John Baylon will see action in the 15th Vietnam International Judo Tournament slated Aug. 3 to 6 at the Phan Dinh Phung Indoor Stadium in Ho Chi Minh City. Continuing its buildup for the Doha Asian games in December, the RP team will test its readiness against some of the region's finest squads. "This is just part of our preparations for the Asian Games, where we hope to contribute to the country's quest for a strong campaign," said Philippine Amateur Judo Association president Dave Carter. "It's the experience and the exposure that we are looking to gain on top of other things." Besides Baylon, the other judokas seeing action in the tough tournament are Oliver Franco, Aristotle Lucero, Gilbert Ramirez, Rick Jayson Senales, Tomohiko Hoshina, Nancy Quilliotes, Estie Gay Liwanen, Jennelyn Abaya, Leilani Chan, and Therddie Yasser Escuvilla. Anecia Pedroso and Melvin Magata will coach the team with Bartholomew Brillo Reynes as head of delegation. The Filipinos are fresh off a successful stint in last month's Thailand International Judo Championships where they won a gold medal and a silver courtesy of Baylon, and Sidney Schwarzkopf, respectively.

Romualdez, Chua top PSA Forum guests

EMBATTLED PHILIPPINE FOOTBALL Federation (PFF) president Johnny Romualdez and executive vice president Tony Chua will answer the issues recently hurled against the sports association when they appear in the weekly PSA Forum tomorrow at the main function room of the Pantalan Restaurant. Romualdez came under fire recently when National Capital Region Football Association members accused him of incompetence and of withholding information on the PFF's budget in recent years. The other topic of discussions in the public sports program sponsored by Pagcor and Manila Mayor Lito Atienza are the coming third leg of the 2006 Petron Ladies Beach volleyball tournament and the competitions in the 2006 season of the National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Naascu). Former sports commissioner Tisha Abundo and Naascu officials led by senior adviser Atty. Ernesto delos Santos of University of Manila will join Romualdez and Chua in the forum.



ERIK TAINO celebrates his win against Iran's Farshad Talavar. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Pinoy Cuppers unchallenged and unscathed

By Marc Anthony Reyes

WITH FIL-AMERICANS Erik Taino and Cecil Mamiit fulfilling the first of what could be a long-term Davis Cup commitment, the Philippines ripped Iran, 3-0, yesterday to top the Asia Oceania Group III action at the Manila Polo Club.

Taino and Mamiit again thrashed their opponents in the singles while Johnny Arcilla and PJ Tierro completed the whitewash in the doubles to cap a resounding sweep of the zonal competition that elevated RP to Group II later this year.

The Filipinos won all their 15 singles and doubles matches against Sri Lanka, Singapore and Vietnam in the group eliminations, and then against Saudi Arabia and Iran in the round-robin final stage.

The promotion was actually sealed last Saturday when the hosts shut out Saudi Arabia. But that didn't stop the Filipinos from taking out Iran in the same fashion.

The Iranians also moved up to the tougher Group II by finishing second in the eight-team competition.

Philippine Tennis Association president Manuel Misa said Taino and Mamiit are already booked to play in the Asian Games in Qatar this December and in the Davis Cup tie this September.

He declined to say how much the Fil-Ams are getting from the Philta for donning the national colors, saying that the 2005 Southeast Asian Games gold medalists are doing it for flag and country.

"They get something as training allowance plus the plane fare and accommodation," said Misa. "It is too little, it's too embarrassing to reveal. Let's just not undermine their commitment to play for the country and the dedication they have been showing us."

NON-PLAYING skipper Roland So lifts the champion's cup. He is flanked by Taino (left), Cecil Mamiit and PLDT and Smart chair Manny V. Pangilinan (right), the tournament backer. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Mamiit and Taino combined to secure the SEAG gold in men's team play, with Mamiit also adding a gold in the men's singles and Taino contributing another gold in the mixed doubles with Riza Zalameda.

Mamiit and Taino managed to get dual citizenship last year when they competed in the SEAG, in the process losing some "perks" enjoyed by other American netters in the world tour.

"They had to give up privileges like free use of facilities all around US and the chance to get wild card entries in US tournaments," said Misa.

Against Iran, Taino brushed off Farshad Talavar, 6-1, 7-6 (4), and then Mamiit crushed Anousha Shagholi, 6-3, 6-1, before a big crowd at the upscale country club inside Forbes Park that bucked the inclement weather.

Arcilla and Tierro outclassed Talavar and Shagholi, 6-3, 6-1, in a match held after the awarding ceremony.

The Philippines, which once made it to the elite Group I with a team that included former Asian No. 1 Felix Barrientos and Roland So, skipper of the current RP team, advanced to Group II in the company of Asian powers like New Zealand and Indonesia.

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A tribute and a dead father's cry for justice

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

ROMEO TOGONON WILL BE REMEMBERED as a newspaper editorial cartoonist, but definitely not just another cartoonist.

He was very useful and efficient.

"Boy Togs" never relied on cute, artsy lines, but instead delivered his message quick, in bold, striking strokes.

There were those who might have suspected that the artist, with his thick, darkish style, could be rushing, or was always in a hurry, to finish (his frame). Truth is there was never wasteful haste in his works; he never telegraphed, but just delivered his message, quickly, effectively.

If to a singer, Togonon refused to fall in love with his own voice. He stated his case clearly and cleverly avoided being entangled with useless fanciness.

There was the clear influence of two of his great friends, Larry Alcala and Hugo Yonzon, but, in their starkest, Togonon's works carried the thick, glowing style of Frenchman Henri Roualt (1871-1958).

* * *

Togonon relied on his pure gifts as honestly as he could.

Of course, he was in obvious haste when he stunned admirers and friends with his untimely exit close to midnight last Thursday.

Boy Togs was only 55 and, despite having completed a very useful career, he had sent in all frankness what could be a prevailing philosophy in his happy life. The one stated by the poet and which goes thus: "By my troth, I care not; a man can die but once; we owe God a death... and let it go which way it will, he that dies this year is quit for the next."

* * *

He was in the thick of restoration efforts for the National Press Club of the Philippines (NPC) at the time of his passing.

Togonon was editorial cartoonist for the Manila Times, director of the NPC, and officer of the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines. A graduate of the University of Santo Tomas, he started his career with the defunct Daily Express, where he rose to become art director. He was also a noted publication designer who helped put up the Daily Tribune (after the People Power uprising), and also had stints with the Manila Chronicle and the Sun-Star Manila.

His remains lie in state at the St. Joseph Chapel, Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels along Sucat in Parañaque, and will be brought to the National Press Club for necrological services on July 27-28.

Interment will be on July 29 at the Manila Memorial Park.

It's hereby hoped that NPC officials would be able to immediately mount a Togonon retrospective.

* * *

Igmidio "Deo" Espinosa, father of former two-time world boxing champion Luisito Espinosa, passed away on Thursday.

Hermie Rivera said Espinosa, 69, was a flyweight standout in the 1960s who battled Japanese boxing greats like Fighting Harada and Hiruyuki Ebihara.

His body lies in state at his residence on Block 49, Lot 2, Lower Tawi-Tawi, Pangarap Village, Caloocan City.

Rivera said they were awaiting word if Luisito could come home from California, where he now works with the Cosco chain.

Rivera first teamed up with Deo Espinosa in leading Luisito to his first world title, the WBC bantamweight kingship, in 1989.

Papa Deo was also at his son's side when Luisito reigned as WBC featherweight champion from 1995 to 1999.

* * *

In a recent interview with GMA-7 in California, Luisito had asked forgiveness from his father.

That interview was not broadcast here, but a frustrated and remorseful Luisito was almost in tears.

Actually, it should be the irresponsible promoters, together with those mainly involved in the national judicial system, who should be apologizing to Luisito for continuously disregarding his fight to get the $150,000 purse for his title defense in Koronadal, South Cotabato, in December 1997.

Deo Espinosa died a very lonely man, wondering when his son would ever get justice.

He himself had written former Chief Justice Hilario Davide, while Luisito also sent a written appeal to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Sorry but, as Hermie Rivera reported, no effect, "*wala ring nangyari.*"

Piccio shines in California

BIGGEST VICTORY so far: Mia Piccio in file photo. ROMY HOMILLADA

BACOLOD CITY—BORN SHOTMAKER MIA PICCIO CHARGED BACK WITH a 3-under par 71 Saturday to rule the Junior Amateur Golf Scholars Jack and Madaline Hooper Memorial Tournament at the California Golf and Country Club in Whittier by three strokes over American Alex Kim.

The 14-year-old Piccio nailed down three birdies on the back nine to overhaul the five-stroke overnight lead of Kim, who stumbled with four bogeys under extremely hot conditions at the 6,098-yard par-74 course.

Counting her opening-round 75, Piccio, a member of the RP national pool, finished with a two-round total of 146. Kim, who showed the way with an opening-round 70, unraveled with a 79.

It was a rousing victory for the sweet-swinging Piccio, who rose to prominence by finishing second to former Philippine Ladies Open champion Frances Bondad in their category in last year's Philippine Amateur Golf Championships.

She also finished runner-up in the Southeast Asian Junior Championships in Jakarta early this year.

The 36-hole tournament was Piccio's first after the World Junior Golf championships, where she finished in a four-way tie for 13th place in her class.

Piccio, whose campaign is supported by ICTSI's Ricky Razon, birdied the par-3 10th, par-4 12th and par 5 13th and moved ahead with a par on the 15th.

In contrast, Kim struggled with bogeys on the 10th and 12th and went two shots behind with another bogey on the 170-yard 17th.

Both bogied the long par-5 first hole before Kim fought back with a 50-foot birdie on the third. Piccio, however, responded with a near eagle on the par 5 fourth to stay within striking distance.

Filipinos Angela Erika de Villa and Leticia Linnel de Villa finished sixth and seventh, after carding two-round totals of 163 and 169, respectively.

Cedelf P. Tupas

RP-Air21 bows to HK minus key players

HONG KONG—DOWN TO ONLY SEVEN HEALTHY players, RP-Air21 sputtered late in the final quarter and bowed to defending champion Hong Kong, 83-76, Saturday in their semifinal showdown in the 2006 Eastcolight-Super Kung Sheung Cup International Invitational basketball championship at the Hong Kong Coliseum.

The loss—its second in four matches—relegated the Basketball Association of the Philippines-supported RP-Air21 team to the battle for third place against CBA champion Winnerway of China Sunday.

Missing brothers Yancy and Ranidel de Ocampo and the injured Wynne Arboleda and Homer Se, the Filipinos managed to hold their ground in a fast and furious battle against the hosts before losing steam in the closing minutes.

The De Ocampo siblings returned home to Manila following the untimely death of their father early Thursday morning, while team captain Arboleda saw action for only two minutes due to a pulled muscle he sustained during the RP-US game last Thursday night. Se played sparingly due to a leg injury.

"We did our best even with only seven healthy players on the floor. Even if we lost, I'm proud of the performance of the boys," said RP-Air21 coach Bo Perasol.

He noted that it was unfortunate that the Filipinos lost the playmaking abilities of Arboleda and the defensive prowess of the De Ocampo brothers in the crucial part of the tough, eight-nation competition.

"Most of the boys are obviously very tired now," Perasol added. "Two of them (K.G. Canaleta and Ronald Tubid) even played for the PBA team in the Jones Cup in Taiwan before flying directly to Hong Kong."

Canaleta led all scorers for the Filipinos with 18 points on 5-of-9 shooting in 33 minutes of action.

Tubid and Mark Telan added 13 points apiece, while Se contributed 12.

Telan, the team's most consistent player, also had 13 rebounds despite battling taller and heftier rivals.

Lau Chi Kin and Poon Chi Ho led Hong Kong with 18 and 16 points, respectively.

Actually, the Filipinos took control in the early part of the game and seized an early 22-16 lead behind the power plays of Se and the outside shooting of Tubid and Stephen Padilla.

The scores:

HONG KONG 83—Lau Chi Kin 18, Poon Chi Ho 16, Fong Shing Yi 10, Tam Wai Yeung 10, Li Wai Lun 8, Ng Wah 4, Choi Fong Yue 4, Wu Kwok Fung 4, Lui 2, Chang Chau 2, Yung Mak 0.

RP-AIR21 76—Canaleta 18, Telan 13, Tubid 13, Se 12, Padilla 7, Dacia 5, Avenido 4, Arboleda 2, Bernardo 1.

Quarters: 23-26, 38-49, 59-60, 76-83

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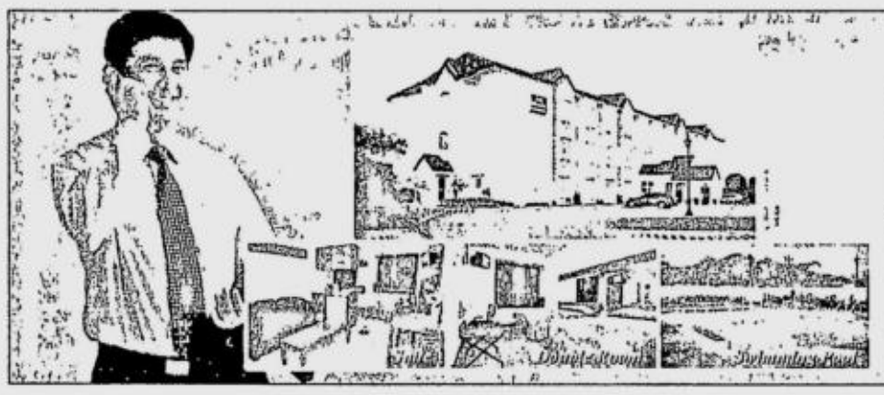

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WORLD SPORTS

Jeter, Wang rescue NY Yankees

TORONTO—DEREK JETER DROVE in the go-ahead run and Chien-Ming Wang pitched six solid innings to help the New York Yankees end a three-game losing streak with a 5-4 win over the Toronto Blue Jays on Saturday. Bernie Williams homered for the Yankees, who moved three games ahead of the third-placed Blue Jays in the AL East and to within 2 ½ games of leaders Boston, who lost 5-2 at Seattle. Mariano Rivera reached another milestone by appearing in his 700th game, pitching a scoreless ninth inning for his 23rd save of the season. Rivera allowed the game-winning home run in the first game of the series on Thursday, as New York lost 5-4 in 11 innings. It was a badly needed victory for the Yankees, who are trying to keep pace with the Red Sox in the division and with the Chicago White Sox in the race for the AL wild card spot. *Reuters*

Police detonate Nelson package

ROANOKE, TEXAS—A PACKAGE sent to the home of golf legend Byron Nelson was detonated by a bomb squad after his wife and police believed the parcel looked suspicious. The contents turned out to include banners from the Masters and a letter, Roanoke Fire Department Chief Mike Duncan said. He said Nelson's wife, Peggy, called police Friday after deciding the writing on the package looked peculiar and noticing that the postage had not been canceled. Remains from the package were given to police, but Duncan said nothing appeared criminal. Nelson, 94, won five majors in his career and had one of the greatest years in golf history when he won 18 tournaments in 1945. *AP*

Murray can't play Davis Cup

EASTBOURNE—BRITISH TENNIS star Andy Murray has been ruled out of Sunday's reverse Davis Cup singles against Israel after arriving at Devonshire Park in a neck brace. The 19-year-old Scot, due to play Noam Okun, was still feeling the effects of an injured neck and strained shoulder sustained while playing in a five-set doubles defeat on Saturday—a result that left Israeel 2-1 up in the tie. Murray had drawn Britain level on Friday after coming from two sets down to beat Andy Ram after Alex Bogdanovic had lost in straight sets against Okun. Jamie Delgado, Murray's doubles partner Friday, was expected to replace the teenager against Okun with Bogdanovic facing Ram. Defeat for Britain would mean a relegation play-off in Euro-Africa Zone Group One against Ukraine in Kiev in September. *AFP*

Campbell targets overseas transfer

LONDON—ENGLAND DEFENDER Sol Campbell is aiming to continue his career overseas after quitting north London giants Arsenal. The 31-year-old had a torrid season at Highbury last term and in February shocked fans and teammates alike by walking out of the ground after being substituted at halftime against West Ham. That led some to wonder if Campbell would return to competitive football but he came back to play in Arsenal's Champions League final defeat against Spanish giants Barcelona. After five years with Arsenal, Campbell is looking further afield. "It all comes down to timing," he explained. "At the end of last season I felt I needed a fresh start and I told Arsenal that. I told Arsene Wenger and David Dein and it's just gone from there." *AFP*

Aussie breaks old swim record

SANDY HOOK, NEW JERSEY—AN Australian marathon swimmer shattered an 81-year-old record by swimming from Battery Park in New York City to Sandy Hook in just over 5 hours. Tammy van Wisse covered the 35.4 kilometers (22 miles) in 5 hours, 6 minutes, 48 seconds on Friday, breaking the old mark of 7:11, set by Gertrude Ederle on June 15, 1925. A holder of 11 Australian and world records, van Wisse chose this swim because Ederle, an American, was her childhood hero. Ederle was the first woman to swim the English Channel. The 37-year-old Van Wisse left Battery Park at 7:21 a.m. Her swim took her past the Statue of Liberty, Governor's Island, the Verrazano Bridge and beyond Coney Island. *AP*

Roddick, Blake dispute RCA tennis crown

INDIANAPOLIS—ANDY RODDICK used his strong serve to overpower Robby Ginepri, 7-5, 6-3, Saturday and move into the final at the RCA Championships.

Roddick will play James Blake for the title, pitting the top two players in the United States. Blake, the tournament's No. 1 seed, is ranked sixth in the world; Roddick, the second seed, is ranked 11th.

Blake defeated ninth-seeded Xavier Malisse, 6-3, 2-6, 6-1, to advance. Roddick, who won the tournament in 2003 and 2004, eliminated the defending champion by winning 32 of 40 first-serve points (80 percent) and 12 of 16 second-serve points. He hasn't lost his serve all week.

Roddick is trying to become the tournament's second three-time winner. Pete Sampras won in 1991, 1992 and 1996.

"It's more what's happening off the serves," Roddick said. "Robby can handle (serve) paces as well as anybody. I tried to mix it up a little bit."

The fourth-seeded Ginepri said, "That's the best I've ever seen him serve. He played a great match."

Both players held serve until the 12th game of the first set, when Roddick broke Ginepri by winning the final three points. Roddick kept Ginepri on the run in the second set, winning four of the last five points of the sixth game to break Ginepri en route to a 5-2 lead.

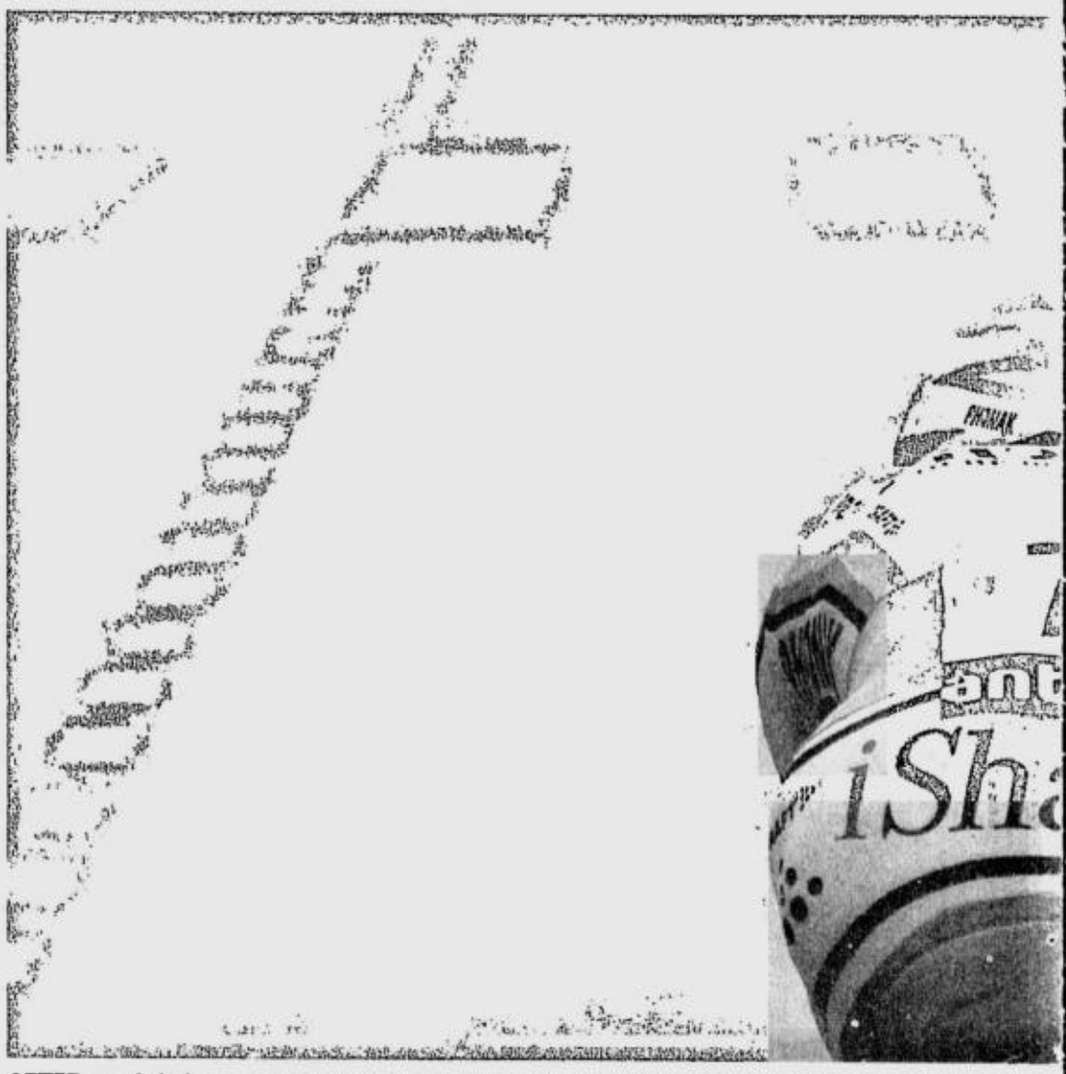
Blake broke Malisse on his first two service games in the first set before Malisse rallied in the second set. Blake rebounded to control the third set, breaking Malisse twice and winning the first three games and the last three games.

Blake said he had to start quickly against Malisse.

"If he gets the lead, he can play lights out and not give you much of a chance," Blake said. "His first serve wasn't coming in very well at the start, which I tried to take advantage of. One of my strengths is taking advantage of second serves."

Blake said dealing with Roddick's first serve could be trouble. Roddick has landed 70 percent of his first serves (149-of-213) this week.

"I'm pretty concerned with that," Blake said. "You've got to stay real focused on your serve, and make sure you hold, because he's going to hold almost every time." *AP*



AFTER nearly being counted out of the race, Floyd Landis will give his Tour de France rivals nothing t

Landis reclaim

Only 'crazy finale' can stop An

MONTCEAU-LES-MINES, France—Floyd Landis' wild ride through France should end in the sweetest way possible Sunday on the Champs-Elysees—barring a crazy finale and as long as his hip holds out.

In this Tour de France anything can happen.

With yet another stunning comeback in the final time trial, Landis reclaimed the famed yellow jersey of the Tour de France leader Saturday along with a 59-second lead that should land him atop the victory podium in Paris.

The American would be picking up where another Yank left off just last year, when Lance Armstrong completed his seventh and final Tour triumph.

"I could not be happier," Landis said. "It's one of the best days of my life."

The Phonak team leader, who trailed former teammate Oscar Pereiro of Spain by 30 seconds before the penultimate Stage 19, outpaced the Spaniard by 1 minute, 29 seconds in the race against the clock.

Overall, Pereiro fell to second, 59 seconds behind Landis, while German rider Andreas Kloeden, 1:29 back, pushed Spaniard Carlos Sastre off the podium into fourth.

Sunday's ride could be the most anticlimactic moment of this unpredictable Tour, marked by Landis' bizarre performance swings—from despair to elation—and news that he's been riding with an arthritic hip.

Landis and Pereiro have taken turns wearing yellow four times since Landis first won it in the Pyrenees after Stage 11. Seven riders have worn the jersey this time—one short of the record.

"Hopefully, I won't give it away again," Landis said. "But I do think it's over now."

Landis became an instant legend among many cycling fans with his rage-fueled comeback Thursday, when he won the last of three Alpine stages to move from 11th to third in the overall standings.

After a strong ride Tuesday on the famed l'Alpe d'Huez ascent to take the leader's jersey for the second time in the Tour, Landis planned a conservative, Armstrong-like strategy.

That didn't work out.

Instead, he was forced to ride all-out after nearly crumbling in Wednesday's uphill finish in La Toussuire—where he lost the lead and fell 8:08 behind Pereiro.

The performance left him feeling "hu-

THE Tour de Fran

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A once-in-a-life
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Zvonareva ousts Williams in Ohio

MASON, OHIO—VERA ZVONAREVA ended Serena Williams' run in her first tournament in six months, beating the seven-time Grand Slam champion, 6-2, 6-3, on Saturday to advance to the final of the Western & Southern Financial Group Women's Open.

Zvonera, unseeded and ranked 52nd, will be making her second appearance in three years in the championship match of the Tier III event Sunday when she faces fourth-seeded Katarina Srebotnik, who upset defending champion Patty Schnyder, 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (6).

Zvonareva lost to Lindsay Davenport in 2004.

Williams, whose ranking dropped to 140th as she missed six months because of a chronic left knee injury, lost just 12 games in winning her first three matches of the tournament in straight sets.

Zvonareva, who was ranked No. 9 in August 2004, fell in the rankings last year while she battled injuries to her left ankle and right shoulder. She dropped just seven games while sweeping her first three matches.

In the other semifinal, the top-seeded Schnyder double-faulted twice during the tiebreaker, including on match point, when her second serve sailed long.

"Strange," Schnyder said. "I got a little tired. I don't know. My second serve is usually pretty reliable. That normally doesn't happen to me."

"Tiebreakers are like roulette," Srebotnik said. *AP*

Arsenal bids star farewell with win

LONDON—ARSENAL INAUGURATED its new stadium with a 2-1 victory over Ajax on Saturday, and bid farewell to its longtime Dutch striker Dennis Bergkamp with a testimonial match.

The friendly at Emirates Stadium at Ashburton Grove in north London marked not only the opening of the 390 million-pound (US$712 million, euro563 million) facility, but the retirement of the 37-year-old Bergkamp, who played the last 11 years for Arsenal after starting his career at the Amsterdam club.

Bergkamp lined up with fellow Arsenal greats including Ian Wright and Patrick Vieira against the four-time European champion, which included the likes of Johann Cruyff and Marco Van Basten.

Thierry Henry and Nwankwo Kanu scored for Arsenal in front of 54,000 in the new building.

The fans were decked out in the red and white of Arsenal or the orange of the Dutch national team.

"If ever I was going to have a testimonial it was always going to be against Ajax," Bergkamp told the crowd after the game. "In 11 years (at Arsenal) I have had a fantastic, successful time and a big part of that has been the fans." *AP*

ARMSTRONG REUTERS

Race chief rues Arm

LE CREUSOT, FRANCE—THE OUTGOING head of the Tour de France said he regretted that Lance Armstrong didn't explain how a French lab found traces of a banned performance enhancer in a 1999 sample.

Jean-Marie Leblanc, who is retiring this year after 18 years as head of cycling's premiere race, said the seven-time champion brought a new culture and "modernity" to the race that was both good and bad.

Leblanc, in an interview Saturday, criticized news reports highlighting his differences with Armstrong, saying th
nicate regularly, "which shows
not that angry at each other."

The two men took a step clos
ciliation by meeting for several m
urday on the Discovery Channel
"It was a good meeting," Arm
according to team spokesman
Such a meeting seemed improb
cently as Tuesday, when Arms
cized the Tour director.

French sports daily l'Equipe

Baldomir knocks out Gatti to retain welterwei

ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY—CARlos Baldomir of Argentina knocked out Arturo Gatti in the ninth round Saturday to retain his WBC welterweight title.

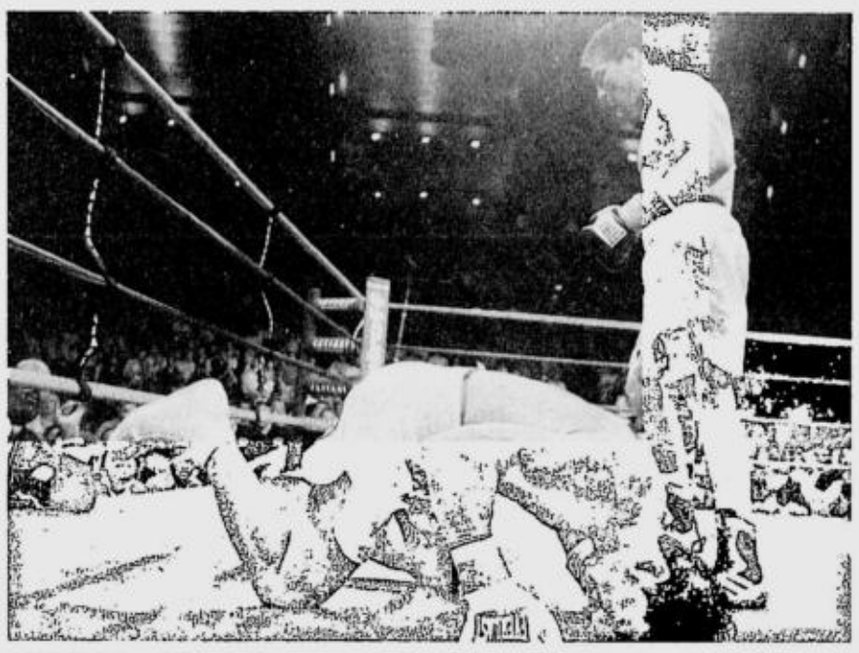
Baldomir (43-9-6), fighting for the first time since stunning Zab Judah on Jan. 7 to win the WBC belt, sent Canadian-born Gatti to the canvas twice in the final round after hemming him in on the ropes and pummeling him with a flurry of punches.

Criticized for not having the punching power to handle Gatti's street-brawling style, Baldomir tattooed him with a steady stream of punches that culminated in a ninth-round knockout Saturday night in Baldomir's first defense of his WBC welterweight title.

The Argentine journeyman silenced a sellout crowd that had come to see Gatti, one of Atlantic City's most popular fighters, but the Jersey City resident was outclassed from the start.

Afterward, Gatti (40-8) didn't take questions from reporters but said, "I don't know if I'm ever going to fight again. I had a good time doing it."

Gatti had said in January that he would have retired if he had lost to unbeaten Dane Thomas Damgaard. But his performance in beating Damgaard and his desire to win a belt in a third weight class—he won the IBF junior lightweight title in 1995 and the WBC junior welterweight belt two years ago—changed his mind.



ARTURO Gatti falls to the canvas against Carlos Baldomir. AFP

Baldomir pummeled Gatti through the first five rounds and sent him to the canvas twice in the final round after hemming him in on the ropes and savaging him with a flurry of punches.

By midway through the fight, Gotti had cuts on his lip and under his right eye, and by the middle of the fifth round, appeared dazed.

"I did say that I was a stronger puncher than Gatti before the fight and I could tell in the first two or three rounds that I was," Baldomir said. "The punches Gatti was throwing didn't hurt me at all. When he put his left hand down, I just knew I could hit him with the right."

Gatti rallied in the middle rounds and appeared to have gotten a foothold in the fight until the ninth round, although he was trailing on all three judges' cards through eight rounds.

"I tried to box him," Gatti said. "He's just very strong, and he was getting stronger as the fight went on. He had my style down. He's a strong guy. I guess I just tried too hard to knock him out early."

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Champ deserves be the next American cycling hero

FRANCE—CAN FLOYD LANDIS BE A GREAT American hero if nobody back home knows his name?

In one of the great sports stories of this or any other year, Landis will ride through the streets of Paris Sunday as the champion of the only bicycle race that really matters.

They call it the Tour de France.

But America seems to own it.

As stirring comebacks go, Landis deserves to be as famous in US sports lore as Seabiscuit. Or the 1951 Giants.

"I could not be happier. It's one of the best days of my life," Landis told the press on Saturday, after putting the pedal to the metal and claiming the race lead in Stage 19 by staring down his closest rivals in a 35.4-mile time trial of nerves and will.

It's all over except the sound of champagne corks popping.

What awaits Landis, left for dead in this race after bonking on a steep, hard road last week, is a well-deserved victory parade to the finish line.

But does it really matter to the masses back in the US?

"I'm very lucky," said Landis, who fell from first place to out of sight on Wednesday, only to come roaring back with one of the most audacious rises from the ashes in the past 50 years of athletic competition. "I'm a person who works hard and never gives up. Otherwise, I'm just a human being."

And that's exactly the problem for Landis.

The United States seems big enough for only one cycling legend.

Seven-time Tour champ Lance Armstrong, whose popularity was never about his sport, has cornered the market on athletic respect for an activity many Americans ignorantly dismiss as being as easy as, well, riding a bike.

Amstrong grew famous for beating cancer, making yellow bracelets hip and causing the heart of country-rock crooner Sheryl Crow to swoon.

Then again, if Tiger Woods can be toasted for walking around Scotland without even carrying his own golf clubs, then shouldn't everyone be pretty impressed when Landis hauls a painfully arthritic hip all the way across France and back on a bike?

Armstrong is a genuine hero and a remarkable crusader, but there's little wonder cancer never had a chance against him. The king of American cycling is meaner than barbed wire.

Landis, who grew up a Mennonite with parents who discouraged him from devoting his life to a silly pursuit that most kids master at age 6, will never be the cyclist that Armstrong was, but you would far rather have the new champ as your best friend.

"I said before, the most exciting way to win the Tour would be in the final time trial, but I really didn't want it to come down to that," Landis told reporters in France. "It takes a lot of hard work and sacrifice to win the Tour, and on top of that, a little bit of luck. I feel lucky."

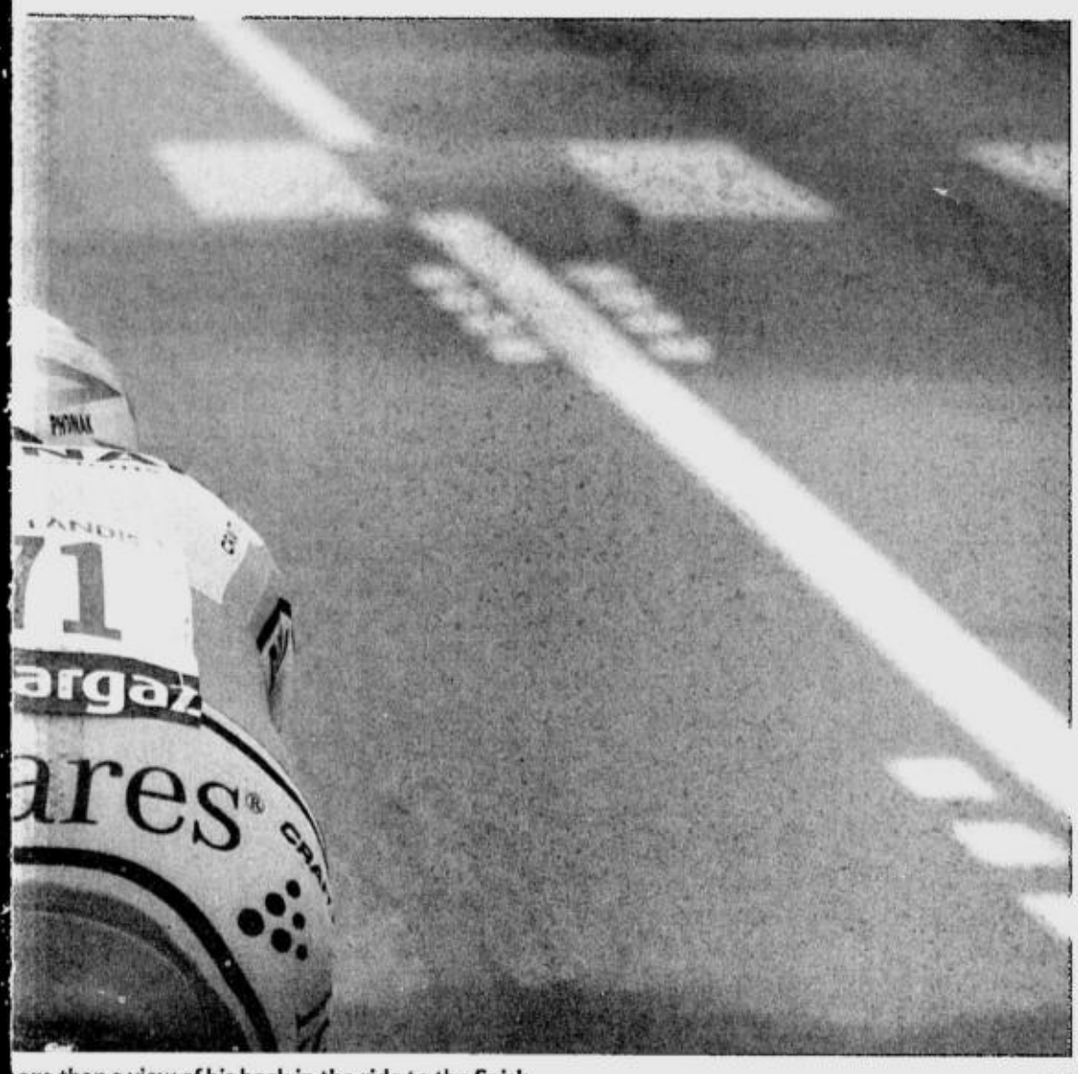
Imagine that. When Landis could have rubbed a yellow jersey in the faces of critics who razzed him for bonking only days earlier, a vindicated athlete responded with good, old-fashioned American humility.

There's a reason the French are known for their arrogance. They earned it, one five-star restaurant at a time. So it must gall them that the USA has put its grimy American fingerprints all over the Tour de France.

Hopefully, the applause for Landis was loud enough in his home country for the French to hear it all the way across the Atlantic Ocean.

New York Times News Service

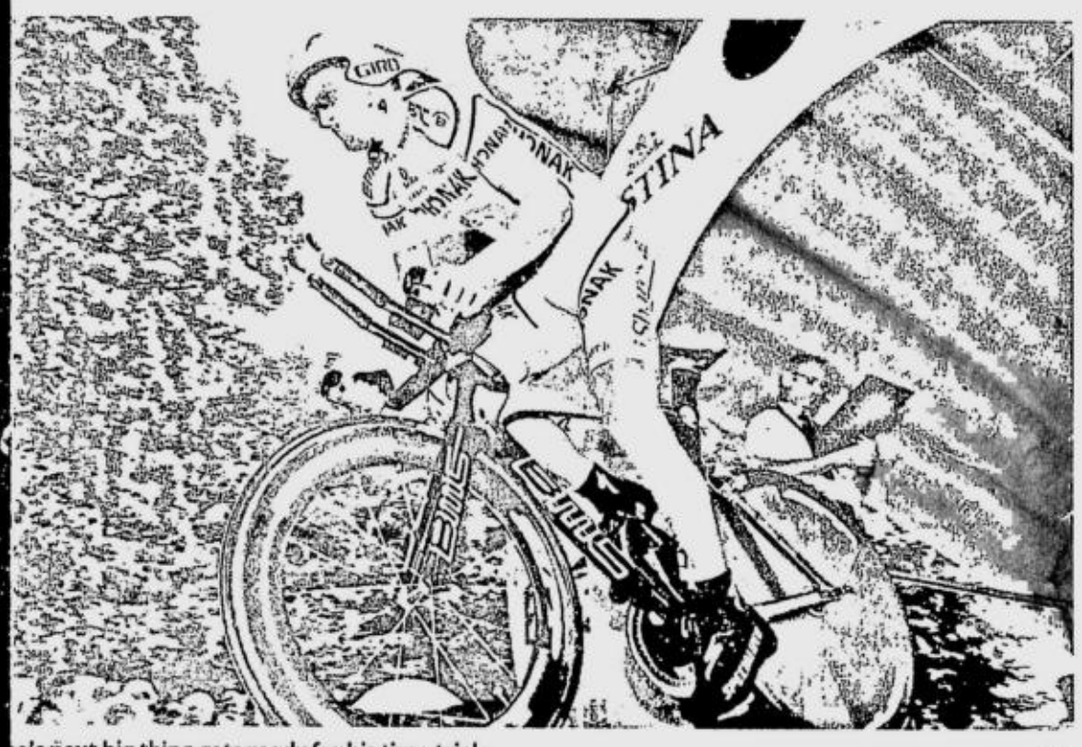
LANDIS AFP



ore than a view of his back in the ride to the finish. AFP

s Tour top spot

nerican from succeeding Lance



e's next big thing gets ready for his time trial. AFP

sion," Landis said. A me Tour winner and lerckx, the father of nate Axel Merckx,

me ride—"the best modern history of the Tour" according to race director Jean-Marie Leblanc—revived Landis' sagging chances. In his first Tour stage win, Landis closed the time gap from 8 minutes, 8 seconds to an incredible 30 seconds.

Saturday's time-trial was the finishing touch.

Landis, who finished second in the stage 7 time trial, had been expected to do well. Pereiro, sensing his lead in danger, mustered a strong ride of his own, finishing fourth and 1:29 behind Landis.

It wasn't enough. *AP*

strong silence

c commu- nat we're to recon- nutes Sat- am bus. rong said, J Rabice. ble as re- ong criti- ported in

August that six of Armstrong's samples tested positive for EPO, which increases red blood cell levels and boosts oxygen capacity.

"I only have one thing to reproach him for, which is when the Chatenay-Malabry lab said it had found EPO in Armstrong (in a sample) dating from 1999, he didn't try to explain himself," Leblanc said.

"But I am talking about 1999. In 2000 and the later years, nobody showed me anything so I fully respect his wins," he said. Armstrong won the Tour from 1999 to 2005. *AP*

ght title

ir held an edge in punches land- 7 of 562 (48 percent) compared nt (161-of-445) for Gatti. lout crowd of 12,763 left no o who it was favoring, chanting -tti!" when the challenger en- arena and loudly booing Bal- n he was introduced. ghters wasted little time mea- h other after the opening bell. ed an overhand left and a left Baldomir's face, but also ab- eral hard shots.

es. Gatti alternated between left-handed stances, a strategy ffectively in his win in January mgaard. But as the fight wore ely abandoned the ploy. ir began to gain the upper hand d round as he landed first two and then two hard rights fol- combination. The round ended mir again catching Gatti with a on of head and body punches. v through the round Baldomir ared to taunt Gatti, pointing to h as if to challenge Gatti to hit *AP*

Republic of the Philippines
Metro Roxas Water District
MRWD Bldg., Km. 1, Roxas City 5800, Philippines
Tel. No. (036) 6210-737/6210-044/6215-474
Telefax No. (036) 6218-083
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
No. 004-06

The **METRO ROXAS WATER DISTRICT (MRWD)**, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	: PPS TRANSFORMER PLATFORM, PERIMETER LIGHTINGS & FENCING
Location	: PASLANG PUMPING STATION, SALOCON PANITAN, CAPIZ
Brief Description	: CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS
Approved Budget for the Contract	: Php 3,388,170.00
Source of Funding	: PROJECT EQUITY BY ADMINISTRATION
Contract Duration	: 60 CALENDAR DAYS
Delivery Period	: 60 CALENDAR DAYS

The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check, will be opened. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bid Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations A (IRR-A).

The schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Advertisement	July 14-28, 2006
2. Issuance of Bid Documents	July 31 - Aug. 4, 2006
3. Pre-bid Conference	Aug. 7, 2006 @ 10:00 a.m.
4. Pre-qualification Conference	Aug. 14, 2006 @ 10:00 a.m.
5. Deadline for Submission of Bids	Aug. 14, 2006 @ 10:00 a.m.
6. Opening of Bids	Aug. 14, 2006 @ 10:00 a.m.
7. Bid Evaluation	Aug. 16, 2006
8. Post-qualification	Aug. 18, 2006
9. Notice of Award	Aug. 21, 2006

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 1,500.00 to the METRO ROXAS WATER DISTRICT. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The METRO ROXAS WATER DISTRICT assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **GONZALO GLEN B. DELGADO**
BAC Chairman

(PDI - July 17 & 24, 2006)

LA/MAT 01946/2005 (L69)
FCMC 10022/2005
IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE
HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION
MATRIMONIAL CAUSE NO.10022 OF 2005

BETWEEN
CIA. MELBA AROMIN — Petitioner
and
MAGALLANES, JOSEPH LOPEZ — Respondent

NOTICE

A DIVORCE PETITION HAS BEEN FILED AGAINST, MAGALLANES, JOSEPH LOPEZ of unknown address who may apply to the Family Court Registry, M2/F, Wanchai Tower No 12 Harbour Road, Hong Kong for a copy of the Petition. If within one month he has not communicated with the Registry the Court may hear the case in his absence

Registrar.

To be advertised as follows -
Once in an English newspaper published and circulating in Philippines
(PDI-July 24, 2006)

City Government of Zamboanga
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
City Hall, Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **CITY GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBOANGA** invites PhilGEPS registered suppliers/ contractors to apply for the following items

Name of Projects	Approved Budget for the Contract	Date/ Time Pre-Bid Conference	Date/ Time Deadline/ Opening of Bids	Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)
1. Construction and Heavy Equipment (Bulldozer)	P 16,000,000.00	July 31, 2006 10:00 AM	Aug. 14, 2006 10:00 AM	P 3,500.00
2. Other Property Plant and Equipment (Vacuum Equipment (Declogger) Trailer and Truck Mounted)	18,020,000.00	July 31, 2006 10:00 AM	Aug. 14, 2006 10:00 AM	3,500.00
3. Construction of City Civil Registrar's Office	10,563,999.50 10:00 AM	Aug. 29, 2006 10:00 AM	Sept. 11, 2006	4,000.00

For Item No. 3. The last day of the submission of the accomplished eligibility Documents shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents on **August 8, 2006** at 1:00 P.M. in the Procurement, Acquisition and Awards Office, City Hall, Zamboanga City.

The Bid documents shall be available at the City Mayor's Office, Procurement, Acquisition and Awards Division, City Hall, Zamboanga City starting **July 29 to August 14, 2006 (Item No. 1 & 2)** and **August 16-25, 2006 (Item No. 3)** upon payment of non-refundable fee indicated above

The Pre-Bid conference shall be held at **City Engineer's Office, Conference Hall, City Hall, Zamboanga City.**

The Bidder shall drop and enclose the original of the Technical Proposal in one sealed envelope; whereas, the original of the Financial Proposal shall be enclosed in another sealed envelope. Both envelopes shall then be placed in another single envelope in the bid box located at the above-mentioned address.

For more information, please call the Procurement Acquisition and Awards Division at telephone no. **[062] 992-7763.**

The **CITY GOVERNMENT OF ZAMBOANGA** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders

(Sgd.) **DR. MARIO D. ARRIOLA**
BAC Chairman

(PDI – July 24 & Aug. 1, 2006)

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ymma

1st Young Market Masters Summit: MARKETING 101

MANDARIN ORIENTAL HOTEL, MAKATI AUG. 3, 2006 (THURSDAY) 8:30AM TO 5:30PM

Specially designed for young marketing and sales practitioners, as well as young-at-heart marketing executives and entrepreneurs who wish to learn from successes and failures of the 1st Young Market Masters Awards (YMMA) winners

From left to right: Edison Oribiana (Davies Paints), Joseph Cruel (URC), Carole Lopez (MSD), Chiqui Escareal-Go (Mansmith President), Josiah Go (Mansmith Chairman and YMMA Founder), Jade Tulio (HBC), Anson Dichavez (Unilever) and Ricarte Gapuz, Jr. (RAGRC)

- 1st Young Market Masters Summit Overview
  by Josiah Go, Chairman, Mansmith and Fielders, Inc. and Founder, Young Market Masters Awards (YMMA)
- Launching and Developing New Brands and Product Categories
  by Joseph Cruel, Senior Product Manager for Beverages, Universal Robina Corporation and YMMA Awardee for Brand Management
- Opportunity-Seeking in the Marketplace
  by Ricarte Gapuz Jr., Chairman, R.A. Gapuz Review Center and YMMA Awardee for Entrepreneurial Marketing
- Special Session: Using Advocacy Marketing to Communicate Your Message
  by Chiqui Escareal-Go, President and Managing Director, Mansmith and Fielders, Inc.
- Open Forum with morning speakers
- Developing Big Ideas to Grab Market Shares
  by Edison Oribiana, Business Development Manager, Davies Paints and YMMA Awardee for Business Development
- Managing Key Accounts for Growth and Preferred Supplier Status
  by Anson Dichaves, Director for Regional Customer Development Training for Asia, Unilever (Singapore) and YMMA Awardee for Customer Development
- Improving Volume Thru In-Store Marketing and Promotions
  by Jade Tulio, Vice President for Marketing, HBC Inc. and YMMA Awardee for Retail Marketing
- Open Forum with afternoon speakers
- Call for Nomination of the 2nd Young Market Masters Awards
  by Josiah Go, Chairman, Mansmith and Fielders, Inc. and Founder, Young Market Masters Awards (YMMA)

Course Investment
(Reservation is open but confirmation of seat is based on payment of delegates.)
P5,800 + 12% VAT if paid in July 2006
P6,800 + 12% VAT if paid in or after August 2006
Send at least 10 participants from the same company, pay only P4,600 + 12% vat per participant if paid before the start of the summit.

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All-star pack of chasers crowds Tiger

HOYLAKE, ENGLAND—TIGER Woods rapped in a 3-foot birdie putt on the 18th hole for a 1-under 71 to return to the top the leaderboard at the British Open on Saturday.

That gave him the satisfaction of knowing that he has never lost any of the previous 10 majors when he took the lead into the last round.

Even so, the gentle wind off the Irish Sea carried renewed hope for Sergio Garcia, Ernie Els and an all-star cast chasing him.

They all knew it could have been worse.

So did Woods.

"Just take away my three-putts, I would have a four-shot lead," Woods said.

Instead, he was at 13-under 203 and will be in the final group with Garcia, a 26-year-old Spaniard who has been chasing Woods for seven years.

Garcia blistered the sun-baked links for a 65 to give him his best chance ever to capture a major.

He holed out a 9-iron from 167 yards for eagle on No. 2, took only 29 shots on the outward nine and never faded. It will be his first time in the final group of a major since he was four shots behind Woods in the 2002 US Open at Bethpage Black.

"I did what I had to do to give myself a chance," Garcia said.

Everyone else did just enough to turn this British Open into a wide-open affair.

Also at 12-under 204 was Chris DiMarco, who overcame consecutive bogeys at the turn by making three straight birdies. DiMarco, who lost a playoff to Woods at the 2005 Masters, had a chance to join him in the lead until his fairway metal to the 18th green got stuck behind a pot bunker, forcing him to play away from the flag.

Els struggled with his irons but refused to allow himself to fall too far behind. He picked up birdies on the par-5 16th and 18th holes for a 71, leaving him in the three-way tie for second.

Woods might be 10-0 when he has at least a share of the 54-hole lead in majors, but in half of those victories he led by at least three shots.

Reminded of Woods' perfect record, DiMarco wasn't interested.

"Stats don't lie. Obviously, he's a pretty good front-runner, and usually he's got a five- or six-shot lead," DiMarco said. "Tomorrow, he has a one-shot lead. You would have thought he'd be 4 or 5 under right now, and he's not."

Another shot back at 11-under 205 was former US Open champion Jim Furyk (66) and Angel Cabrera, who also shot 66 and left the gallery wondering if there was something in the tea at Hoylake that suited Argentines.

The last time the British Open came to this links course was in 1967, when Robert De Vicenzo of Argentina held off Jack Nicklaus.

Everyone must feel they can get their names inscribed on the silver claret jug Sunday afternoon, thanks to a pedestrian performance by Woods with the very club that had served him so well the first two days.

"I know I'm in the last group. And I've got a one-shot lead," he said. "And hopefully, tomorrow I can play like the way I did today and just putt a little better."

Garcia had a few problems of his own, missing a 6-foot birdie on the 17th that might have sent him to a course record. He had another birdie putt from the same distance on No. 11 that he left short. *AP*

TIGER Woods finds himself staring at a slew of worthy contenders. AFP

Foes out to rip Woods 'home'

HOYLAKE, ENGLAND—THOUGH HE was born thousands of miles away and lives on the other side of the Atlantic, Tiger Woods is at home here at Royal Liverpool Golf Club.

And home is wherever there is a 54-hole lead in a major championship. That is where he's most comfortable and that is where Woods finds himself once again, thanks to yesterday's gut-check, third-round 1-under-par 71 in the 135th British Open that enabled him to cling to a one-shot cushion over the likes of Sergio Garcia, Chris DiMarco and Ernie Els with Jim Furyk and Angel Cabrera just two back.

As scenarios go, Woods at 13-under 203, sitting atop that trio at 204 and that duo at 205, would appear to fit him well. Perfectly well, some would suggest, for he has had 10 54-hole leads in majors and has gone on to win all 10.

Unbeatable?

"I don't think any of the players believe any of that," said DiMarco, who battled Woods eye-to-eye in a Masters playoff in 2005. Woods won, of course, perhaps because he doesn't have a clue as to how to lose these majors when he gets into the lead. Then again, Woods was hardly in the mood to stick out his chest; in his own estimation, after all, he had allowed too many players to get back into the hunt.

"I thought I hit the ball great. Just take away my three-putts—three in eight holes—and I would have had a four-shot lead," said Woods.

With so many names making noise, Woods hardly settled into a match-play attitude with his playing competitor, Els, nor will he assume that mode today when he goes off in the final pairing with the precocious Garcia.

"It's not just Sergio," said Woods. "There are a bunch of guys up there."

But Woods has protected 54-hole leads from Augusta, Georgia, to St. Andrews, Scotland, from Long Island, New York to Pebble Beach, California, and places in between.

Speaking for his colleagues, however, DiMarco promised all challengers would be in attendance here along the Irish Sea.

"Stats don't lie. Obviously, he's a pretty good front-runner, but usually he's got a five- or six-shot lead," said DiMarco. "[Today] he has a one-shot lead. Anything can happen."

With three players having pulled within one shot and two others sitting just two back, Woods was asked about his game plan.

"To win the golf tournament," he said.

We'll see today whether he can continue to follow his blueprint to perfection. *New York Times News Service*

DiMarco: Tiger can be beaten AFP

ELS: Hanging around REUTERS

GARCIA: Chance is there AP

DiMarco sees divine help

HOYLAKE, ENGLAND—THERE is little question that Tiger Woods will be the favorite entering Sunday's final round of the British Open.

But sport is full of instances when an overwhelming favorite did not win. When someone else had luck, fate or, as Chris DiMarco called it, "divine intervention" on their side.

"My mom's name is Norma," DiMarco said of his mother, who died after suffering a heart attack July 4 while on vacation in Colorado. "When I got on the first tee, the scorer's name was Norma."

"I got goose bumps. I told my caddie, 'She's right there with us, I know she is. I've got somebody up there that's going to be looking over me (today)."

Entering the Open, DiMarco was in the midst of perhaps the worst stretch of his career, having missed the cut in seven of his previous 12 events, including the Masters and US Open. Of the five tournaments in which he did play the weekend, only once did he finish better than a tie for 42nd.

Combine that with the fact that he'd never finished better than a tie for 47th in six previous British Opens, and you'd have little indication of a successful week. However, DiMarco shot a 2-under 70 on Thursday, a 65 on Friday and a 69 Saturday to put himself in contention. Upon emerging from the scorer's trailer, he embraced his father, Rich, in a huge bear hug.

Rich and Norma DiMarco went to Colorado for a three-week vacation. After checking into a rental condo in Keystone, Norma went upstairs while Rich brought in the luggage.

"I heard a noise like a grunt," he said. "I ran in and she was on her back, not breathing. I knew there was something terribly wrong. We called 911 and they were there in 8 minutes. I tried doing CPR on her, but she was gone.

"Thank God Chris brought me here to try and take my mind off of it, and the way he's played here. I'm a man of faith, and I firmly believe she's here this week, looking down and saying, 'Son, do your thing, I'm behind you.'" *NYT News Service*

Appeals trial in Italian scandal starts

ROME—THE APPEALS TRIAL IN ITALIAN soccer's match-fixing scandal began Saturday with all four clubs involved hoping to have their sentences reduced.

Juventus is appealing its demotion to Serie B and the loss of its last two Serie A titles, claiming that the sanctions are excessive. Lazio, Fiorentina and AC Milan are also appealing.

An Italian sports tribunal last week relegated Juventus, Lazio and Fiorentina to the second division. Milan escaped demotion but was given a 15-point penalty and banned from competing in the Champions League this season.

Juventus was also penalized 30 points, Fiorentina was penalized 12 points and Lazio seven.

The first part of the hearing was largely devoted to technicalities.

"I'm confident," Lazio lawyer Gianmichele Gentile said outside the hotel where the sports trial was being held. "We are here to make the truth clear, namely that Lazio is innocent on all charges."

Fiorentina owner Diego Della Valle said: "We hope they look at all our documents and that they allow us to defend ourselves considering that we really haven't done anything."

The sports tribunal also sanctioned 19 former officials—including a four-year ban for Della Valle—and referees for influencing matches.

"The sentences are absolutely unacceptable," said Fulvio Gianaria, the lawyer for former Juventus general manager Luciano Moggi, the man at the center of the scandal. "There's no proof of wrongdoing, therefore, we expect a reduction of the penalties."

Moggi and former Juventus chief executive Antonio Giraudo received maximum five-year bans for match-fixing and disloyalty, with a recommendation that they be banned for life. *AP*

Anthony makes a case for himself at Team USA

LAS VEGAS—CARMELO ANTHONY has yet to play in an NBA All-Star Game. He was viewed as being on the bubble for one of the 12 spots on Team USA, which plays in the world championships in Japan next month.

But through the first week of practice here, no one was making a bigger impression than the Nuggets' forward.

"Very consistent. Very focused," said Miami guard Dwyane Wade, the 2006 NBA Finals MVP. "He's been the best performer here."

Added Detroit guard Chauncey Billups: "He's showing that he's definitely one of the best players in the world."

Anthony came to camp in great shape after working on his conditioning daily this summer, most of the time in Denver. But questions lingered about whether he was a team player or if he'd play defense. So far, several coaches and players say Anthony has played unselfishly and as hard as anyone. He's surprised some by showing leadership skills.

"He's playing defense, rebounding, running the floor," USA assistant and Phoenix Suns coach Mike D'Antoni said. "He seems like he's on a mission."

Cavaliers forward LeBron James described Anthony as "refreshed. It looks like he's been working real hard."

Anthony admits he came to camp feeling he had something to prove.

"I want to make a statement," he said. "It's a new beginning. Two weeks ago, I said this is like a new beginning for me with the USA Team and the Nuggets. I really want to take a different approach and show people what I'm all about."

James, Anthony and Wade were the highlights of the 2003 NBA draft class,

CARMELO Anthony (left) battles Shane Battier for rebounding position. AP

but Anthony has been overshadowed by the other two, despite averaging 26.5 points this past season. James and Wade are two-time NBA all-stars, but Anthony has yet to be selected. And while Anthony hasn't gotten his team past the first round in the playoffs, Wade led Miami to the championship this year and James took Cleveland to the second round.

Anthony is confident he can play on the same level as James and Wade, but understands why he's not always viewed as being in their class.

"They took it a step further," he said. "LeBron got out of the first round. Dwyane winning a ring. Once I do (something comparable), it's right back to normal."

Said Wade: "Everyone has the time in their life where they get the attention. My rookie year, it was him and LeBron. Now it's me and LeBron. Hopefully, soon, they will put all three of us (together)."

Although he felt in peak physical shape when he arrived here last week, Anthony came with baggage. He played little for Team USA at the 2004 Athens Olympics and was criticized for being disappointed with his playing time. Off-court issues since have hampered his public persona.

A talk with USA Basketball managing director Jerry Colangelo and help from his college coach, Syracuse's Jim Boeheim, a USA assistant, led to him being given another shot with Team USA.

"There were some guys that might have questioned everything," Boeheim said. "He's proven what he can do. He's worked hard. Worked hard on defense. Sometimes you get a certain reputation, where something happened maybe two years ago or a year ago and it becomes life, when it really isn't.

Team USA forward Bruce Bowen had heard some of the negative talk about Anthony but wanted to wait until he spent time with him to make up his mind. He has gained strong respect for his Western Conference rival.

"Everyone's made mistakes in this game. But they seem to persecute some guys because of what they see on the outside. They see the tattoos. They see the hair braided. It's like, 'Gang member.' That's not the case.

"This kid is real good and he wants to be a part of this. He could have easily said, 'Nah, I'm not going to play in this. I've played in this before.' But he's come back—and that speaks volumes about him as a person to me." *New York Times News Service*

Ozamiz five scuttles Pagadian, keeps NBC crown

OZAMIZ CITY—OZAMIZ COTTA CLOBBERED cross-town rival Pagadian, 105-83, Saturday night and became the first back-to-back champion in three years in the Guerrero Brandy-NBC national basketball tournament.

The Cotta Shrine cagers exploded for 34 points in the third quarter to break away from a nine-point lead at the turn in Game 3 of the title showdown before a joyous, jampacked crowd at the Gov. Angel Medina Sr. gym here.

Ex-pro Marlon Basco proved his worth as the conference's Most Valuable Player, firing 19 points to lead Ozamiz's hot shooting night of 51 percent (49 of 96) from the field.

Ozamiz Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog charges never had an offensive shortage as Basco got plenty of help from his teammates.

Bob Cozy Ilanga, son of former Crispa Redmanizer Willy "Nonoy" Tanduyan, finished with 13 points and four assists in only 13 minutes of action, while Egay Echavez, who played for the Ginebra Gin Kings in the last PBA quarterfinals, tallied 14.

"This (championship) is a fitiing gift to our city, which is celebrating the Cotta Shrine's 250th year anniversary this month," said an ecstatic Parojinog.

The Explorers, who won Game 1 in Pagadian City, fell behind by as many as 23 points (78-55) midway in the third quarter. The expansion team of Mayor Sammy Co shot a poor 39 percent from the field in its most important game in the country's most prestigious regional tournament sponsored by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring, Molten, Spring Cooking Oil, Regent Foods, Firefly Lightings and Prime Channel.

Ozamiz bagged the crown last year at the expense of defunct FEI-Cavite, then coached by Pagadian's current mentor, Segundo "Bong" de la Cruz.

"This city loves this team," said team manager Mike Ochate. "We promised the fans that we'd keep the title, and we did."

Ozamiz bench strategist Alberto Calvo was named coach of the conference, while PBA rookie draft applicants Ilanga, rebounder Brian Daja and Peter Naron of Pagadian and Batang Tagaytay's Nino Marquez joined Basco in the Mythical Five.

The scores:

OZAMIZ 105—Basco 19, Cavan 18, Echavez 14, Ilanga 13, Alberto 9, Bansil 7, Llangco 6, Yabut 4, Caylan 4, Guerrero 4, Alvarado 2, Delina 1

PAGADIAN 83—Naron 15, Ayuk 3, Singedas 3, Omandam 3, Unabia 2, Pamaran 2

Quarters: 19-17, 44-35, 78-59, 104-85

Back in field of dreams

Without much funfare, a bunch of hardy boys return the Philippines to the Senior League World Series in style

By Musong R. Castillo

PURE JOY: Members of the RP Senior League team whoop it up during the belated victory party. ERIK ARAZAS

THERE WERE NO BRASS BANDS, NO welcome-home streamers, no shrieking fans when a bunch of teeners came back home last week.

In a country enamored with basketball, billiards and boxing, such a welcome is hardly ever prepared for baseball athletes. Never mind if they returned as champions.

But the trophy these boys, aged 15-16, brought home from Jakarta, Indonesia, was definitely something to crow about.

The trophy, inscribed with the words Senior League Asia-Pacific champions engraved on it, serves as the country's ticket to a long-overdue shot at redemption.

As Asian champion, the Philippines earned a return trip to the Senior League World Series in Bangor, Maine, in the United States next month for only the second time in 14 years. The only other time the country joined that tournament in that stretch was in 1992, and all it did was get embroiled in an infamous eligibility scandal that even the world press feasted on.

This team, captained by Paolo Gerardo Mallari, defied the odds in Indonesia, ripping a squad from the Marianas Islands in abbreviated style, 13-1 in the finals, to book the trip to the World Series.

The Philippines also humbled teams from the host country, Guam and Saipan, which all have solid baseball programs to draw the attention of US Major League scouts.

"This (championship) was more difficult because we played on foreign soil," team manager Arsenic Laurel said. "We had to win our games convincingly, because homecourt advantage becomes a factor in close games."

And the Filipino boys know what they will be up against in Maine, where they face not only teams with the homecourt edge but with the advantage in sheer size and talent.

"The average height of the American team is 6 feet 2," right-handed pitcher Angelo Esguerra, a Barry Bonds fan, said. "Ours is just slightly above 5-4, so there's a big difference right there.

"But we won't be intimidated."

The Filipinos also expect to arrive to a not-so-warm welcome in Maine.

The Philippines will not be a crowd favorite in Maine, where remnants of its 1992 team still linger. The RP squad then had all of its victories—and the championship—forfeited for fielding overaged players.

It was a development that did not help baseball in its bid to come out of the doldrums back home. Instead, it put the sport in a deeper hole.

"A lot of things were said and will be said whenever the Philippines plays (in the World Series) because of that (eligibility incident)," Laurel added. "But we are sure that we have a perfectly eligible team now."

Represented by the International Little League Association of Manila (ILLAM) and with players who live or study in the Quezon City, Alabang and Makati areas, the RP team leaves for the US on Aug. 7 to represent the Far East against squads coming from Europe, Canada, Latin America and six regional teams from the United States.

This ILLAM squad has gone through a lot before finally winning the regionals. The core of this team has lost more games than it could count since it started campaigning at the turn of the millennium in the 11-12 bracket.

"That's why we know that we're living a dream (after the Indonesia romp)," Esguerra said. "And we will definitely fight hard [in the World Series] against anyone."

"It's a tough task," Laurel said of the forthcoming stint. "But after going winless (in 2002), there's no way for this team to go but up."

"We're looking forward to the experience, because we are sure that it will even be better compared to Indonesia," 15-year-old Ivan Haresh Gabay said in Filipino. "It will be a different atmosphere for sure."

Laurel's crew thumped Tanauan in the Philippine series finals to make it to the Indonesia joust where it went undefeated in seven games to underscore his squad's readiness to take the next step.

The ace in the squad is Gian Jimenez, a right-handed hurler from Cavite who is in his last year of Senior League eligibility.

A senior at Woodridge College, Jimenez is the only player in the lineup who stands six feet, and Laurel believes that the reed-thin 16-year-old who idolizes Ichiro Suzuki of the Seattle Mariners is the "future of Philippine baseball."

"My dad doesn't want me to try basketball, because it might ruin my (baseball) career," Jimenez, credited with wins against Jakarta and the championship game in the regionals, said.

One of the keys to the Indonesia win and to their coming US stint, Laurel believes, is that his team has been able to practice with the men's national team for quite sometime now.

"The awe factor (in the World Series) will not be too much for these boys because they're used to being pitched and hit by players [from the RP Team who are] a lot bigger," Laurel explained.

The Senior League World Series is a pet project of acclaimed novelist Stephen King, who declares the games open each year after arriving at the venue aboard a big easy rider accompanied by fireworks as well as the Bangor mayor.

It has produced such big names as Houston Street and New York Yankees third baseman Alex Rodriguez, who started his Little League career at 10.

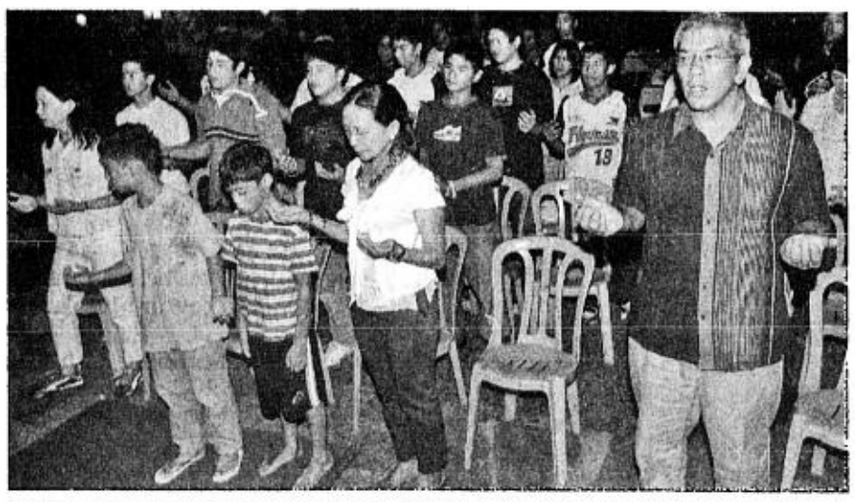
The other members of the team are Matt Laurel, Luke Paolo Bernardo, Christopher John Concepcion, Jose Luis de Mesa, Jerwyn Fernandez, Yuji Horibata, Paolo Martin Jalandoni, Matthew Aaron Reyes, Sebastian Thomas Uichico and Antonio Brias.

All the members of the team, their parents and the coaching staff that includes Eduardo Oliver and Norando Fabila, gathered for a belated victory dinner Friday night after hearing mass officiated by Rev. Fr. Mario Baclig.

The good priest struck the nail right on the head in his homily, telling the team to win a victory for their hearts in Maine.

Win or lose, if only because this team is going to Maine fair and square, the players have already earned a victory in the hearts of their compatriots.

And it will be a return to the World Series worth remembering.



TEAM manager Arsenic Laurel (right) as well as team members and their parents hear Mass before celebrating their victory in the Senior League regionals. ERIK ARAZAS

ADIDAS REGIONALS

Backdown, Uproar top Luzon Streetball

BACKDOWN REFUSED TO DO JUST THAT, using its steady free-throw shooting to win the Luzon Adidas Streetball Challenge regional tournament in Baguio City Saturday.

Composed of players from the Cordillera Career Development College (CCDC), Backdown squeezed into the finals by beating top ranked Quilt from St. Louis University (SLU), 8-6 , in a free throw shootout after a 4-4 standoff in regulation.

In the finals, Backdown converted two of four charities through Remson Avila. and Michael Balgua to clinch the title with a 12-10 overtime decision over Ballistic, a team of players from different schools.

Alvin Malamion also shone for Backdown by tying the game at 10-all with less than a minute left in regulation.

Ballistic, which reached the championship by slipping past University of Baguio's Poised team in the other semifinal duel, had enough time to win in regulation but Waylon Nibaten missed two shots.

The win earned Backdown a trip to the Adidas Streetball Challenge national finals set at the Mall of Asia on Aug. 12-13 together with the early qualifiers from Mindanao.

Uproar, bannered by players from host University of the Cordilleras, topped the women's side of the event organized by the Futures Sports Events Management Corp.

Composed of Cherrielyn Joy Sacro, Krizzia Garcia, Loretta Tiago, and Lewyne Mollejon, Uproar outplayed Zionite from SLU in the finals, 7-4, to also qualify to the national finals for the second straight year.

Uproar downed Trifonic from UB, 8-4, while Zionite nipped top-ranked Yuvan from Brent, 6-5, in the semifinals.

Present at the awarding rites were Adidas Sports and marketing manager Goody Custodio, local organizer Leo Arnaiz, Futures Sports Events official Dondell Pasion and tournament director Jay Salvador.

Pimentel, Suede pace Shell chess

EUGENE PIMENTEL AND MIKEE CHARlene Suede lived up to their billing by sweeping their first four matches to show the way in their respective divisions in the Tuguegarao leg of the 2006 Shell National Youth Active Chess Championships at the People's gymnasium in Tuguegarao City.

Pimentel, the top seed in the junior division, bested Francis Jaucian, Rodrigo Luis, Simon Ceynas III and John Burnatay to share the lead with fourth-ranked Jayson Visca with perfect four points in the seven-round Swiss system tournament.

Visca matched Pimentel's fine start with wins over Dave Malamnao, Volter Logan, Manny Arao and Mac Lagula.

Suede, playing out of Pitogo Elementary School in Makati, toppled Alpha Guitering, Vesel Kenept, Paul Geron and Gerald Calayan to lead nine others with four points in the kiddies (14-and-under) side which drew a huge field of over 400 players.

Pasay cockpit anniversary derby today

THOUSANDS OF COCKFIGHTING ENTHUSIASTS COVERGE TODAY AT THE Pasay City Cockpit for the PCC 20th Anniversary 5-cock derby which sizzles at 4 p.m. More than 75 fights are on tap in the derby sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor. Participants and enthusiasts alike will receive anniversary gifts courtesy of Pasay Cockpit management. The total prize is P2 million for an entry fee of P15,000. According to pit managers Eric dela Rosa, Butchoy Olano and Roming Vergara, participants who score two points in the elimination round will get P10,000. A brand new Honda Wave awaits the fastest win champion. For inquiries, call 843-1890, 843-1746 or 816-6750.

Bates stagfest set at Makati Coliseum

PREPARATIONS ARE IN FULL SWING FOR THE ANNUAL Richard L. Bates 7-Stag Derby slated Aug 28 and 30 at the Makati Coliseum with B-Meg Derby Ace as sponsor. First held in 1981, the event is the longest-running stag derby in the country. A prize pot of P700,000 awaits the winners for an entry fee of P16,500. For farm-to-farm screening and wingbanding, call 824-0237 or 0916-7238412 (Verna Bates), 896-3545 or 895-6475. Stags with the wingbands of PCAP, LGBA, GF-BAN, Migba, Bakbakan, Balbina, NGBA and Pagba will be accepted subject to reclassification. To qualify, a stag must be from eight to 10 months old only and has seven primary wing feathers still intact, uncut and untampered.

Late burst powers La Tienne to victory

By Musong R. Castillo

CARMONA, CAVITE—FAR SECOND choice La Tienne outkicked Slatkis and two other hard-finishing entries in the final 150 meters yesterday to rule the fourth leg of the Imported Stakes series at the San Lazaro Leisure Park here.

Goaded splendidly by young Class A rider Elvie Salvador, La Tienne came up with a late burst under extreme pressure to turn back the third-rated Slatkis by close to a length and book the biggest win of her career.

The five-year-old chestnut offspring of Belong To Me out of Tierani came charging back from the rear of the eight-horse pack to clock 1 minute and 50 seconds for the 1,750-meter journey.

La Tienne turned in solid quarter clockings of 10, 23.5, 25, 24.5 and 27 in securing the win, worth P360,000 to her owner Batangas town mayor Eddie Dimacuha.

Slatkis was second, two lengths clear of California Lady, under rider Jeffril T. Zarate, who was actually looking for a second straight win after guiding Mes Monique to an upset win over outstanding pick Manhattan in the previous race.

Sent off as the first pick, the JM Ladiana-piloted California Lady, who sold P267,785 out of the total pool of P786,482, nipped the versatile Dream Cross, under CV Garganta, for the P75,000 third placer's purse.

NOKIA CUP: Abraham Pascual (left) of La Vista receives his trophy from Nokia Cup intervillage golf tournament organizer Vince Villafuerte of Videocom after finishing second runner-up in individual play in Group 5 of the event among golfing villages in the metropolis. La Vista finished second to Hillsborough in Nokia 2 to advance to the grand finals of the annual tournament in November.

SPORTS

Sermona back in hunt for full marathon title

Tops Bacolod elims; Apuhin wins

By Christian Irl Tan
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—AFTER TAKING A three-year break from the Milo Marathon, national team member Julius Sermona returned to the annual event yesterday with an impressive victory in the men's 21-K race that ended at the Provincial Capitol here.

The 28-year-old Sermona, who hails from Himamaylan City, clocked 1 hour, 15 minutes and 31 seconds to rule the 11th leg of the nationwide qualifying series over reigning Visayas champion Eric Panique and Rene Desuyo of Cadiz City, who timed 1:16:34 and 1:20:44, respectively.

Sermona, who bagged the 5,000-meter silver medal and the 10,000m bronze medal in last December's Southeast Asian Games in Manila, kept Panique company in the first seven kilometers before stepping up his pace.

"I just ran at my own pace because I knew that I could not overdo myself," Sermona, an enlisted man in the Philippine Air Force, told the INQUIRER moments after crossing the finish line.

Last full marathon

Sermona last won a Milo Marathon leg in 2000 before opting to join the event's 10K side events in Metro Manila. It was also the last time he ran the full 42K marathon.

Sharing the limelight with Sermona was Bacoleña Irene Apuhin, who ruled the women's side in runaway fashion.

The 22-year-old Apuhin, a student of the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos, led all the way, clocking 2:06:04.

Apuhin, who topped the Iloilo City elimination leg in 2004 and was third last year, beat Cherry Lee Bautista of Himamaylan (2:07:33) and Mary Jean Capati, also of Bacolod, (2:07:42).

The winners of the men and women's divisions received P10,000 each, while the second and third placers pocketed P6,000 and P4,000, respectively.

All top three finishers in both divisions of the race held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel-Manila, Cebu Pacific, Adidas, Department of Tourism and Powerbar made it to the national finals set Dec. 10 in Manila.

University of St. La Salle student Alan John Sitchon topped the men's 5K race with a time of 20 minutes and 10 seconds, while Lynlyn Diaz ruled the women's side with a 21:10 clocking.

Prevaling in the 3K age-group event were Erose Miranda and Jessica Tejada in the 6-9 age group and Delfin Gumacal and Marjorie Rosales in the 10-12 category.

The next qualifying leg is set in Davao City on July 30.

RACE winners Irene Apuhin and Julius Sermona (third and fourth from left) with (from left) Milo's Robby Afzelius, Negros Occidental Basketball Association president Oscar "Dodong" Bascon, Gov. Joseph Maranon, Milo Sports Event executive Pat Goc-ong and national race director Rudy Biscocho.

Milo Little Olympics to feature 11 events

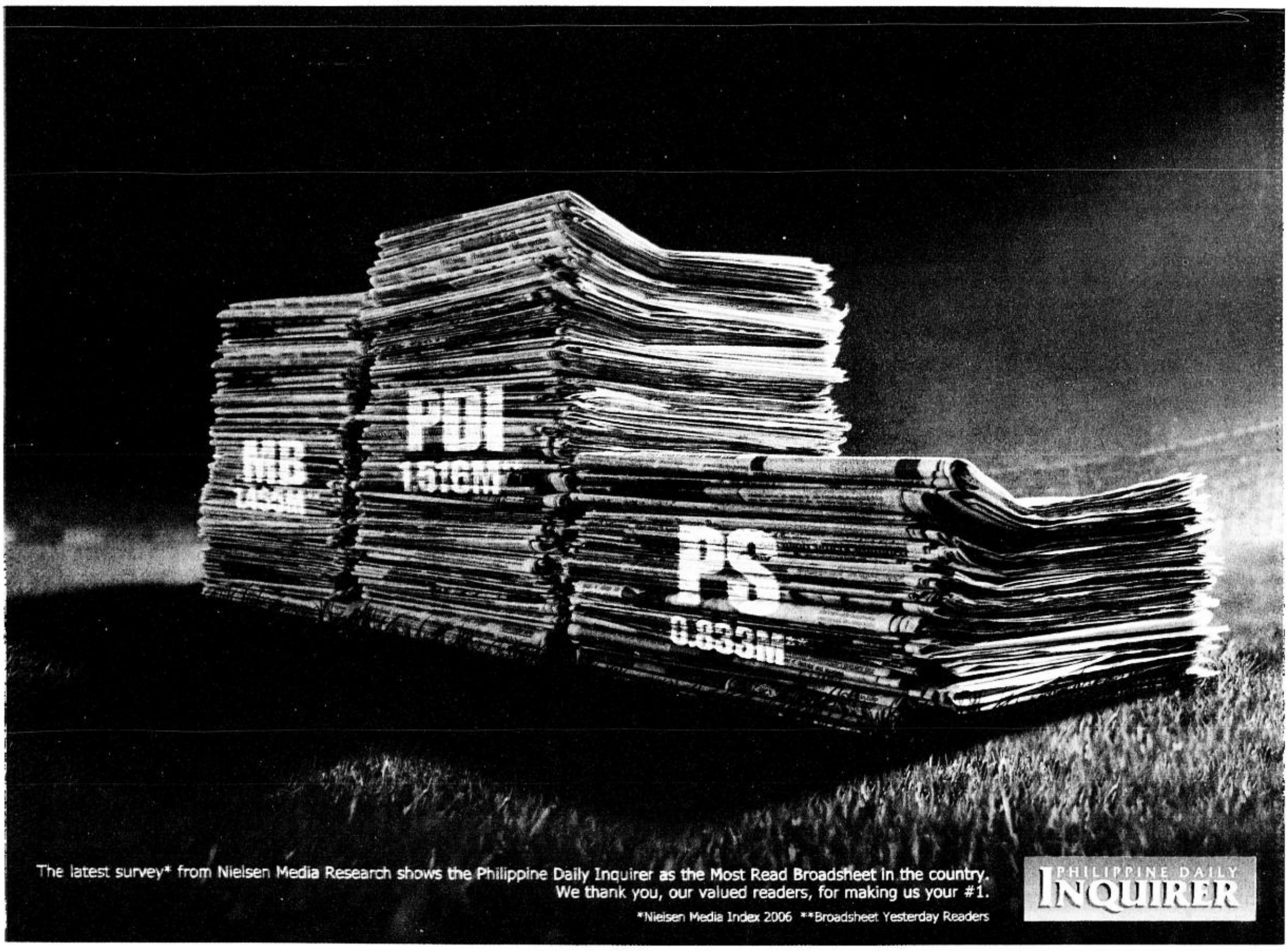
OVER 7,500 HIGH SCHOOL AND elementary student-athletes will dispute the championships in 11 events in the 2006 Milo Little Olympics which get going on Sept. 2-3 and Sept. 9-10 at the Marikina Sports Park in Marikina City and other venues.

Students from schools in the National Capital Region and neighboring provinces will vie for the 1,565 medals (gold, silver and bronze) at stake in the annual event.

Organizers said the events are athletics, badminton, chess, football, gymnastics, lawn tennis, swimming, sepak takraw, table tennis, taekwondo and volleyball.

Registration for the Children's Tennis Workshop-organized competitions has started at the games secretariat inside the Marikina Sports Park.

For inquiries, call the secretariat at 943-2140 or the CTW Manila office at 4282069 and 0916-4708286.



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MOVIE buffs all, at the opening rites of the 2nd Cinemalaya Film Festival on July 17.
PHOTO COURTESY OF CCP

A happy postscript to Cinemalaya '06

Festival director is proud to report a bigger audience and smoother operations this year

By Marinel R. Cruz

NESTOR JARDIN RODEL ROTONI

WE LEARNED FROM LAST year's mistakes," declared Nestor Jardin, Cultural Center of the Philippines president and festival director of the recently concluded 2nd Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival.

This year's festival, which culminated with an awards ceremony last night, ran "more smoothly than last year's," according to Jardin.

"More people came to the screenings—the figure is about 40 percent higher than in 2005," Jardin also told INQUIRER Entertainment in a phone interview on Saturday.

Speaking of screenings, he added that these no longer extended till the wee hours. "This was because the organizing committee instructed the filmmakers to limit their films to two hours. Some of last year's featured films ran beyond three," Jardin pointed out.

He noted the absence of long queues at the ticket counters. "Last year, the lines went far as the CCP driveway. We solved that problem by adding two more ticket counters and two more venues," he explained.

Determined

In a previous interview, Jardin had said Cinemalaya was determined to avoid a repeat of last year's "unfortunate" experience. He said the Orgcom was "so lenient" last year that, a few days before the festival opening, not all the featured films had been submitted.

The Orgcom's strict imposition of deadlines this time around had resulted in the disqualification of two full-length film entries, Jon Lazam's "Mga Anino sa Apuhap" and Khavn dela Cruz's "Larombata."

Seven awards were handed out yesterday at the CCP Main Theater to competing filmmakers in the full-length feature category. The awards were for Best Picture, Special Jury Prize, Best Direction, Best Screenplay, Best Cinematography, Best Editing and Best Sound.

For the short films, the 10 finalists competed for the Best Short Film, Special Jury Award, Best Director and Best Screenplay Awards.

The major winners received trophies and cash prizes from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA).

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12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

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12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

4 LADY IN THE WATER
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

5 WHITE LADY
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

6 NACHO LIBRE
1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

7 LAKE HOUSE
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

8 WILD ORCHID 2
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9 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

10 LOVE WRECKED
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50

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2 WILD ORCHID 2
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

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12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

4 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

5 SUPERMAN RETURNS
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METRO EAST

1 UNTED 93
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

2 LADY IN THE WATER
1:15 3:50 6:25 9:00

3 NACHO LIBRE
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
11:45 2:50 5:55 9:00

5 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

6 WILD ORCHID 2
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

7 SUPERMAN RETURNS
12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

8 WHITE LADY
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

NOVALICHES

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 WHITE LADY
4 NACHO LIBRE
5 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
6 WILD ORCHID 2

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4 RESERVE

1 LADY IN THE WATER
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3 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
4 WILD ORCHID 2

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1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 WHITE LADY
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 RV RUNAWAY VACATION

DASMARINAS ANGELES

1 WHITE LADY
2 NACHO LIBRE
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
4 RV RUNAWAY VACATION

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 WHITE LADY
4 RV RUNAWAY VACATION

IMUS STARMILLS

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 WHITE LADY
5 NACHO LIBRE

1 SPL
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 WHITE LADY
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS
5 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2

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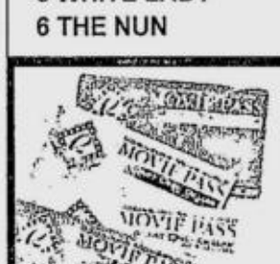
2 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
3 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS
5 WHITE LADY
6 THE NUN

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 WHITE LADY
3 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
4 LOVE WRECKED
5 SEE NO EVIL



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FILMMAKER Adolfo Alix Jr.

Love,

By Paul Daza
Contributor

TO LOVE AGAIN DESPITI
hood of another heartbrea
theme of "Donsol," a wo
malaya feature film. Adolfo
produced, and directed thi
about resilient whale shark
human beings.

"Donsol" stars Sid Luce
Aquino as two strangers w
fall in love even though their
tionships have scarred then
Daniel, a young whale shar
girlfriend left him and th
(Donsol) in Sorsogon for gr
Aquino is Teresa, a breast
whose husband (Mark Gil)
videotaping the whale shark

Daniel meets Teresa when
see if she's moved on since t
instead of finding closure, Te
anew in the handsome yo
takes her to see the gentle s
there a happy ending in the h

"Donsol" is a refreshin
calming movie devoid of cli
made mainstream Philippin

BRYCE Dallas Howard as th

'Lady'

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

SINCE "THE SIXTH SENS
M. Night Shyamalan has pu
sion, creating generally pr
acters' enigmatic realities.
inal, but he gives his o
mythologies, so that even
and other unusual beings t
hension, he knows how to n
formation on them notwi
true with "Lady in the Wat
we need more time to get r
lows a more offbeat, mo
structure.

The story is simpler and
looser sense of logic in that
huge leaps of faith from o
other films, the lead charac
"Lady," but a fateful encou
creatures changes his mono

After apartment superin
(Paul Giamatti) rescue
nymph—named Story (Bry
a pursuing mythical beas
apartment residents band t
fill a mission. By helping
roles, these misfits are ultim
race as well, at least accord

Of course, it wouldn't b
didn't appear in it. His scre
ably longer and more cruc
ing author destined to in
leader. This is when things
ence on screen is a distracti

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(left) shooting in Donsol with his stars, Sid Lucero (center) and Simon Ibarra.

loss and beauty

THE LIKELI-
. This is the
derful Cine-
Alix Jr. wrote,
moving story
and hopeful

o and Angel
o reluctantly
previous rela-
Lucero plays
guide whose
r hometown
ner pastures.
ncer survivor
rowned while

she returns to
e tragedy. But
esa finds love
ng man who
a creatures. Is
orizon?
ly beautiful,
hés that have
cinema pre-

dictable and tiresome. There are no hysterical confrontation scenes, no melodramatic plot twists, no forced *kilig* scenes. What "Donsol" has is an insightful story about love's fleeting fragility, told with a narrative simplicity that recalls "The Bridges Of Madison County." That Clint Eastwood movie tells of a passionate four-day romance amidst ancient wooden bridges; "Donsol" uses whale sharks (called *butanding* by the townsfolk) as metaphors for human beings who fall in love again and again, as surely as seasons come and go.

Remarkable

Both Lucero and Aquino turn in nuanced and convincing portrayals. The scene where their attraction to one another manifests itself as they climb over a fence is remarkable for its understated quality, as is the scene where he recoils at the sight of the scar above her absent right breast.

Providing crucial comic support is Kenneth Ocampo, who gets the movie's biggest laugh when he proudly declares to tourists that he's Donsol's one and only gay whale shark. But beyond providing comic relief, Ocampo's role symbolizes the Filipino who dreams of marrying a rich foreigner who will give "her" the good life.

Further illuminating this portrait of a struggling province kept alive only by tourism are the always reliable Jaclyn Jose, Cherie Gil, Mark Gil and Bembol Roco. Their presence makes "Donsol" a more star-studded affair than the usual independent digital movie.

Also contributing immensely to elevating the movie's quality are the picturesque cinematography of Eli Balce and Boy Siojo. So lyrical and poetic are their shots of Donsol's beaches, sunsets, islands and whale sharks that one at times wishes the movie had been shot on film instead of digital video.

Jesse Lucas' simple but effective guitar music is always around when it's needed, melodiously underscoring the joys and pains the characters feel onscreen without ever being intrusive.

Cinemalaya may be over, but keep an eye out for future "Donsol" screenings. Watching it is very much like going on a much-needed vacation, which refreshes your mind and reinvigorates your senses. If you love Filipino films, "Donsol" may even make you believe Philippine cinema can be great again.

Unfair!

From Michael Joseph Ostique (mystyx29@yahoo.com), National University of Singapore:

I would like to comment on Marinel Cruz's story, "No Idols Here." I think it is unjust for the paper to proclaim a supposed lack of talent in Davao City, when the truth is the contrary. Being a Davaoeño, I find it offensive that Pilita Corrales and Ryan Cayabyab can dispense such insults.

Davaoeños have contributed more than enough to our national pride in music. The bands Freestyle and South Border trace their roots to Davao. Lately, we have produced more talent, with Erich of "Star Circle Quest," Chuck of "Starstruck," Gerald of "Pinoy Pop Superstar" and Cass of "Pinoy Big Brother."

I hope you will not publish any more stories as offensive as this one in the future.

FEEDBACK

e "narf" in M. Night Shyamalan's latest fantasy-drama.

: fairy tale fluff

." WRITER-DIRECTOR
sued his own artistic vi-
ound layers in his char-
is ideas aren't that orig-
n spin on established
t they're ghosts, aliens,
it defy human compre-
ake us believe, scant in-
standing. That is still
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e Dallas Howard) from
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itely saving the human
g to some old legends.
a Shyamalan film if he
time here is consider-
l, as he plays an aspir-
uence a future world
get really iffy; his pres-
n. There are things you

just can't suspend disbelief over, like that character, and Story's trippy claims that she's from an undersea world (everyone takes her word without ever seeing her monster attacker). The voice of reason comes from a skeptical character much later in the movie, but by then it doesn't really matter. Again, it's like a simplified bedtime story that doesn't bother with important details.

But the script is well-written in parts, particularly those involving an all-knowing, surly film critic character (Bob Balaban), who points out the allusions of events and people to Cleveland and, well, to himself. Too bad the assemblage of characters here is at times disaffecting and too contrived.

REVIEW

Among them is a kid who sees Story's future by staring at cereal boxes (eh?), and a petulant woman who knows all (all!) the key characters and symbols of the narf legends by heart. There are many convenient plot elements that help Story—and the story!—move forward, including a timely placed *deus ex machina* that predictably lets the characters wriggle out of the whole mess, unharmed.

Howard's partly amnesiac Story is just okay, but she appropriately radiates an aura of divinity, even when she's immobile most of the time. No, we really don't see her world, which probably would've spiced things up visually.

While it's not the usual Shyamalan twist-filled crowd-pleaser, "Lady in the Water" is still about humanity and the human condition, even when they're forced to commune with the bizarre. It isn't that big a departure from his other fantasy-laced films, but it lacks some of the more complex puzzles and rewarding resolutions that his better-written ones have believably presented.

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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 LADY IN THE WATER	2 NACHO LIBRE	3 THX PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 1:00, 4:10, 7:20, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 LOVEWRECKED	5 RV: RUNAWAY VACATION	6 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	7 SUPERMAN RETURNS
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 LADY IN THE WATER		2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX LADY IN THE WATER 1:40, 4:05, 6:30, 8:55, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS		2 THX PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST 2:05, 5:10, 8:15, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	3 RV: RUNAWAY VACATION 2:00, 4:15, 6:30, 8:45, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 SUPERMAN RETURNS 1:45, 4:50, 7:55, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 12:45, 3:50, 6:55, 10:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST		2 RV: RUNAWAY VACATION	
	3 LADY IN THE WATER	4 SUPERMAN RETURNS	5 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	2 LADY IN THE WATER	3 RV: RUNAWAY VACATION	4 NACHO LIBRE
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST		2 WHITE LADY	
	3 RV: RUNAWAY VACATION	4 LADY IN THE WATER	5 SUPERMAN RETURNS	

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ROUNDUP

3D film explosion

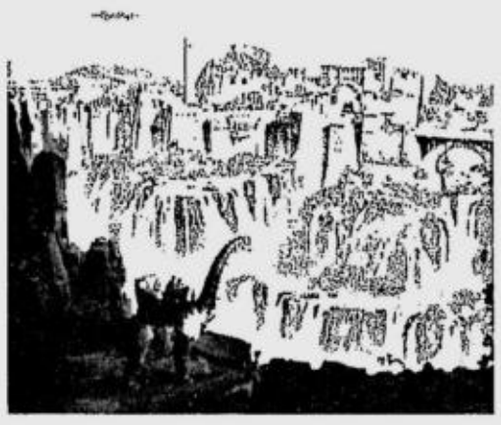
LOS ANGELES—The debut on Friday of Steven Spielberg's animated thriller "Monster House" is part of an explosion of 3D films that Hollywood studios and exhibitors hope will bring people back to the movies.

The Columbia Pictures film will debut on the largest number of digital 3D-equipped screens ever, in a nod to the unexpectedly robust results shown last fall by the Walt Disney Co's 3D release of "Chicken Little."

What about those headache-inducing red-and-green glasses with cardboard frames? No more. Modern 3D patrons wear sturdy plastic polarized glasses, similar in size to sunglasses, with clear or slightly tinted lenses. *Reuters*

'Dinotopia: New Horizons'

ON HALLMARK Channel' "Dinotopia: New Horizons" on July 30, 9 p.m., a hunter discovers the elixir of youth only to learn the price for getting younger and younger.



The show, written by Nick Harding and directed by David Winning, stars Michael Brandon, Jonathan Hyde, Georgina Rylance, Shiloh Strong, Danny Midwinter, Matt Rippy.

Free concert tickets

THIS MONTH, myPad treats new subscribers to two music spectacles. They can log on to www.mypad.net to register. At stake are free CDs and concert tickets to the concerts of Black Eyed Peas (July 27) and Pussycat Dolls (July 28).

Farrell shoos intruder

SANTA MONICA, California—Colin Farrell obtained a restraining order against a woman who walked onto the set and confronted him during a taping of talk show "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno."

The order issued Friday in Los Angeles County Superior Court in Santa Monica requires Dessarae Bradford, 31, to stay away from the actor pending an Aug. 16 hearing, a court clerk said.

The "Tonight Show" incident occurred Thursday at NBC studios in Burbank. It was not shown in the broadcast. *AP*

'Lust, Caution' cast

HONG KONG—Taiwanese director Ang Lee has cast Cannes best actor winner Tony Leung, Chinese-

COLIN Farrell

American pop star Leehom Wang and mainland Chinese newcomer Tang Wei in his upcoming spy thriller "Lust, Caution."

The film marks Lee's return to Chinese-language film after making "The Hulk" and "Brokeback Mountain."

"Lust" is about a group of patriotic students who plot to assassinate the intelligence chief in the Japanese-backed Chinese government during the World War II era. *AP*

'Tunay na Swerte'

"ANG TUNAY na Swerte," a three-night live TV special starting tonight until July 26 on ABS-CBN 2, features celebrities who have found the secret to good fortune. The show airs after the network's late night current affairs program.

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

RICO MARIA Ilarde's "Sa Ilalim ng Cogon" and "Aquarium" were screened at the Teatro Giovanni during the Udine Film Fest in April.

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

SOMEWHERE IN NORTHEASTERN Italy, Filipino filmmakers Erik Matti, Joyce Bernal and Rico Maria Ilarde are considered among the hottest, hippest auteurs of the moment. That's according to Udine Far East Film festival president Sabrina Baracetti and coordinator Thomas Bertacche.

Its website proclaims Udine as "the world's largest showcase of Asian popular cinema," attended by cineastes from all over Europe. Bertacche pointed out that, apart from "genre" movies, Udine also showcases art films and special retrospectives.

The first Filipino film screened at Udine was Jeffrey Jeturian's "Pila Balde," produced by Regal in 1999. Works by Mario O'Hara and Chito Roño have also been featured since.

Bertacche and Baracetti acknowledged that the works of the late National Artist Lino Brocka had introduced them to Filipino movies. They credit Hollywood producer Roger Garcia, Udine programmer for the Philippines and Indonesia, for leading them to the most promising new filmmakers in Philippine cinema.

In this year's Udine, held in April, Matti's "Exodus: Tales from the Enchanted Kingdom," Ilarde's "Aquarium" (from "Shake, Rattle & Roll 2K5") and "Sa Ilalim ng Cogon" and Bernal's "D'Anothers" were in the lineup.

Baracetti and Bertacche, who are also consultants for the Venice International Film Festival, were in Manila recently to attend the 2nd Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival. INQUIRER Entertainment caught up with them between screenings.

Bertacche said a good movie can "cross over" in spite of the language difference: "We saw two movies (at Cinemalaya—"Rotonda" and "Saan Nagtatago si Happiness?") without subtitles, but we knew they were good."

What brought you to the Philippines?

Sabrina Baracetti: This is our second visit. We were here in 2003, when we got Erik Matti's "Gagamboy" and Chito Roño's "La Vida Rosa" for Udine.

Thomas Bertacche: Roger Garcia told us about the new digital directors in Cinemalaya. These talents will one day become the leading names in the industry.

SB: We wanted to meet them because we invite a lot of Asian directors to Udine.

How would you describe the present crop?

SB: There's freshness and originality. They have the potential to reach all kinds of audiences. We consider Filipino cinema as one of the strongest in the region.

TB: Very interesting. They have lots of stories to tell. But I have to caution them not to abandon film and limit themselves to digital movies. With film they can reach more people abroad.

What types of films are you seeking for Udine?

SB: They should tell good stories that can be understood by Westerners.

What can make Filipino movies cross over abroad?

TB: A director shouldn't make a movie only for himself. He should do it for his audience. He should know how to mix different genres.

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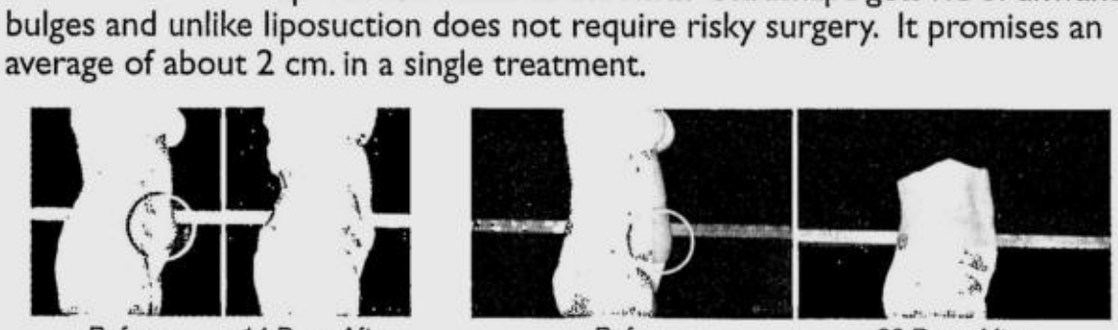

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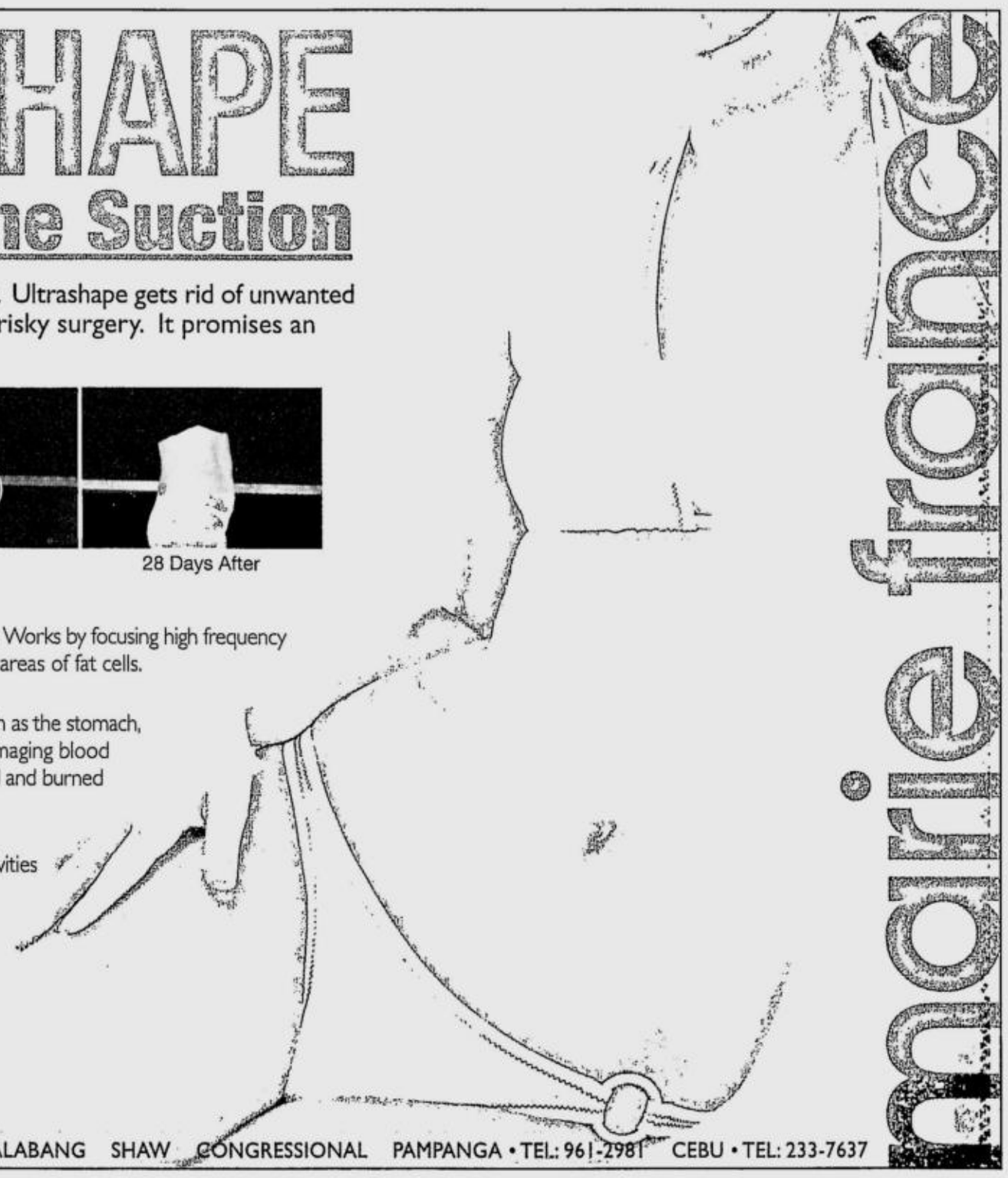

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Cinema 3 Pirates of the Caribbean 2
Cinema 4 Nacho Libre
PREMIERE R. V. Runaway Vacation

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 Pirates of the Caribbean-2
2 Lady in the Water
3 White Lady
4 R. V.

Starmall
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
R. V.
Pirates of the Caribbean-2
White Lady

Metropolis Star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504286, 8433994
1 White Lady
2 Superman Returns
3 Pirates of the Caribbean-2
4 Lady in the Water

Theatres
SM Fan Dr. Mall Concession
Telephone No. (64) 8-600-1005
Superman Returns
The Fast & The Furious -3
White Lady

Pacific Mall Lucena Cinemagic
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel. (042) 660-5271
Pirates of the Caribbean-2
White Lady
Reserved
Reserved

Filinvest Festival Cinema
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 Pirates of the Caribbean-2
2 Lady in the Water
3 Superman Returns
4 Lady in the Water
5 R.V. Runaway Vacation
6 Pirates of the Caribbean-2
7 Pirates of the Caribbean-2
8 I Wanna Be Happy
9 Nacho Libre
10 White Lady

Blue Wave
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sta. Ana, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 White Lady
2 Lady in the Water
3 Pirates of the Caribbean - 2
4 Reserved

Super Cinerama
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 Lady in the Water
2 Pirates of the Caribbean - 2
3 White Lady
4 Nacho Libre
5 Superman Returns

The Marketplace
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 Pirates of the Caribbean - 2
2 White Lady
3 I Wanna Be Happy
4 Reserved

Masagana Cinema
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 White Lady
2 Pirates of the Caribbean - 2
3 Superman Returns

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 Lady in the Water
2 Pirates of the Caribbean - 2

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 I White Lady
2 Lady in the Water
3 R. V.
4 Pirates of the Caribbean - 2

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 Superman Returns
2 White Lady

Eastwood Cinemas
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 Nacho Libre
2 Pirates of the Caribbean 2
3 Lady in the Water
4 Runaway Vacation

Cinema 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 R. V. Runaway Vacation
2 White Lady
3 Pirates of the Caribbean - 2
4 Reserved

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Binan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 White Lady
2 Pirates of the Caribbean - 2
3 Superman Returns
4 R. V. Runaway Vacation

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 White Lady
2 I Wanna Be Happy
3 Superman Returns

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 I Wanna Be Happy
2 White Lady
3 See No Evil
4 Superman Returns

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 Pirates of the Caribbean - 2
2 R. V. Runaway Vacation
3 White Lady

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 White Lady
2 I Wanna Be Happy

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 Batas Militar
2 Superman Returns

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 Pirates of the Caribbean-2
2 Rosario 18
3 Batas Militar
4 Sabik Sayo

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 Senses
2 Bold Star
3 White Lady
4 Batas Militar
5 Pirates of the Caribbean-2

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 R. V. Runaway Vacation
2 Pirates of the Caribbean-2
3 White Lady
4 Superman Returns

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 I Wanna Be Happy
2 Peep Show

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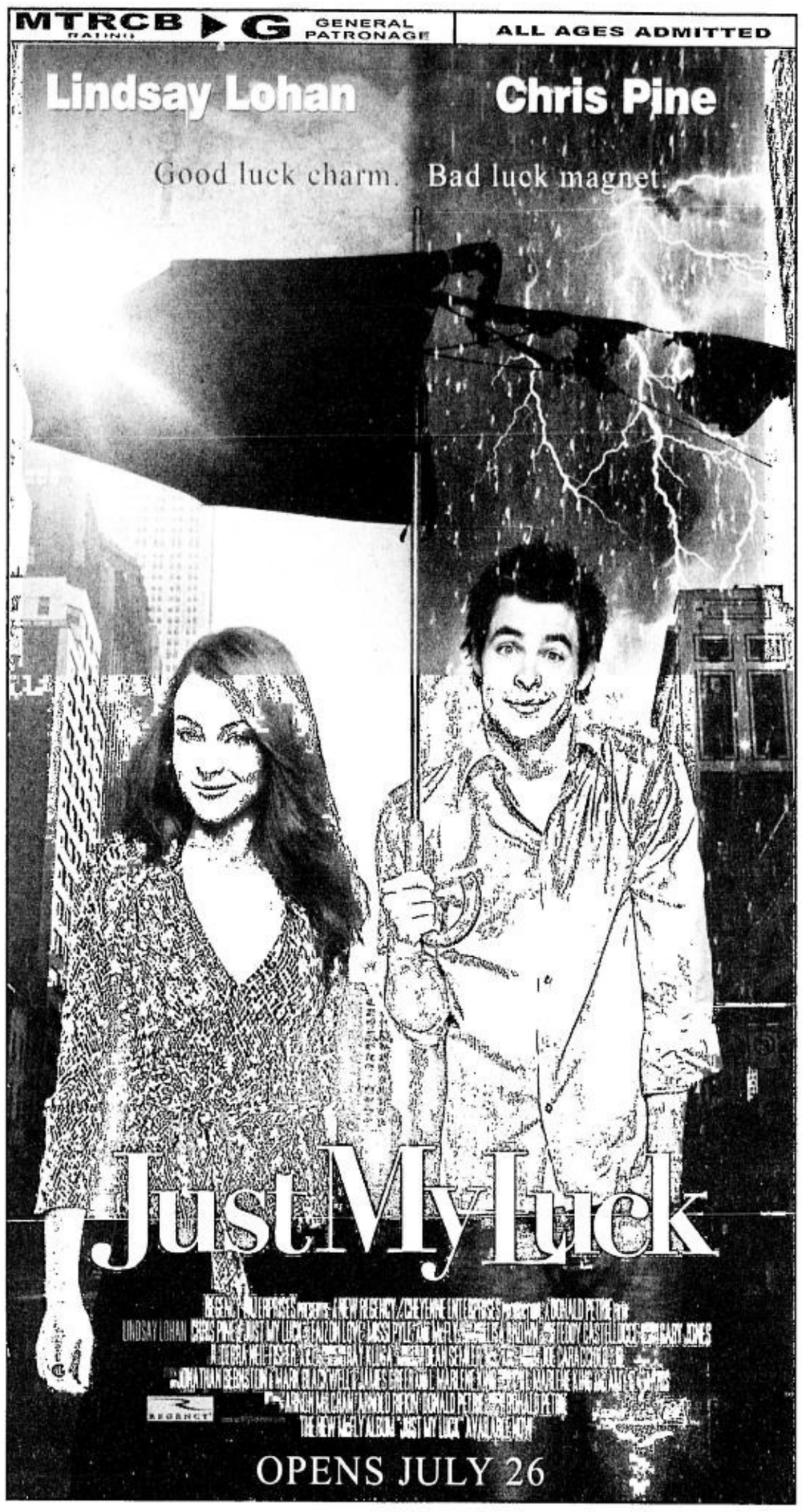
Philippine Daily Inquirer

JOB Market Part 1

MTRCB RATING G GENERAL PATRONAGE | ALL AGES ADMITTED



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WHITE LADY 12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40
SUPERMAN RETURNS 12:30 / 3:30 / 6:30 / 9:30
NACHO LIBRE 1:05 / 3:15 / 5:25 / 7:35 / 9:45
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 :00 / 4:00 / 7:00 / 10:00
LADY IN THE WATER 12:20 / 2:10 / 2:45 / 4:35 5:10 / 7:00 / 7:35 / 9:25 / 10:00
RUNAWAY VACATION :10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 12:00 / 3:00 / 6:00 / 9:00

MALL 5

RUNAWAY VACATION :2:05 / 2:15 / 4:20 / 6:35 / 8:45
LADY IN THE WATER 1:15 / 3:40 / 6:05 / 8:30
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 12:00 / 3:00 / 6:00 / 9:00
WHITE LADY 12:10 R4 / 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30
NACHO LIBRE 12:00 / 2:10 / 4:20 / 6:30 / 8:40
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1 NACHO LIBRE 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00 PG-13
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 12:30, 3:50, 7:10, 10:30 GP
3 LADY IN THE WATER 12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:00 PG-13
4 RUNAWAY VACATION 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00 GP

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Cinema 2: PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00 GP
Dolby Digital Surround-EX

PROMENADE GREENHILLS
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NOW SHOWING

Cinema 3: NACHO LIBRE 12:15, 2:25, 4:35, 6:45, 9:00 GP
Cinema 4: LADY IN THE WATER 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 PG13
Cinema 5: PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 10:40, 1:30, 4:25, 7:20, 10:15 GP

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JULY 29,2006	PILITA C & ELIZABETH R.	8:30PM
AUG. 11, 2006	Simply SITTI	9:00PM

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JULY 29, 2006	TUKAR	8:00PM
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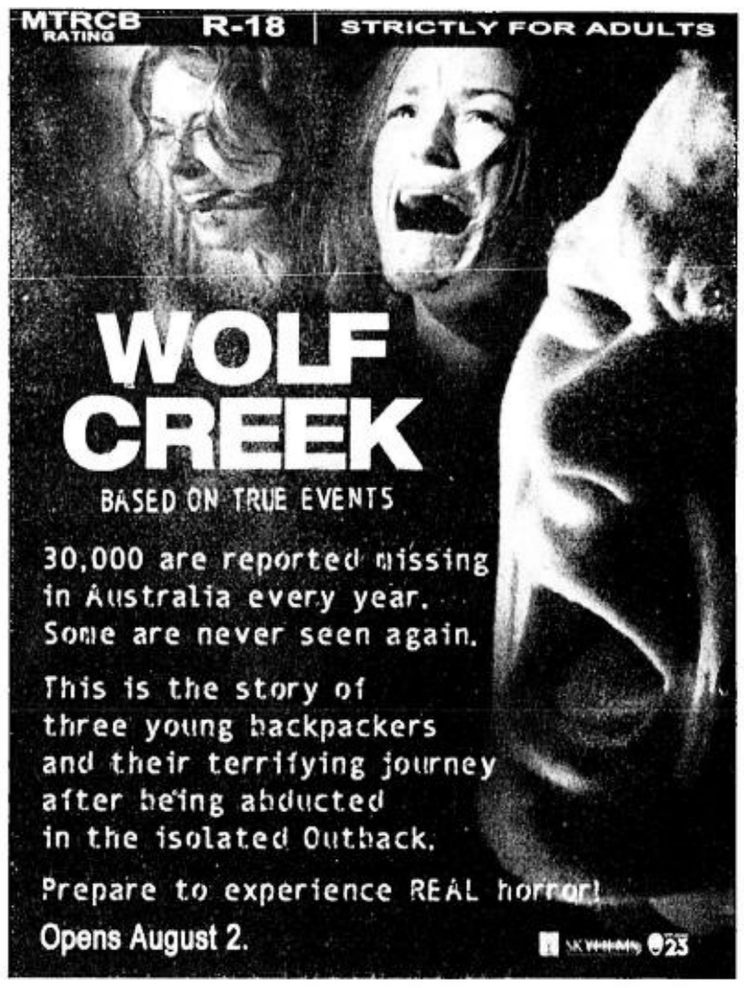

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City — Tel. No: 8981440-41 — Dolby Digital Surround-EX

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 G 1:50,5:00,8:10	NACHO LIBRE PG13 1:20,3:30,5:40,7:50,10:00	RUNAWAY VACATION G 1:25,3:30,5:35,7:40,9:50
PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2 G 12:40,3:50,7:00,10:10	SUPERMAN RETURNS G 12:30,3:40,6:50,10:00	LADY IN THE WATER PG13 1:10,3:30,5:50,8:10,10:30

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MATINEE PHP 111.00 – SCREENINGS BEFORE 5:00 PM – MONDAY-FRIDAY

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 MTRCB GP 1:10, 4:20
2 LADY IN THE WATER MTRCB PG-13 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 MTRCB GP 12:30, 3:40, 6:50, 10:00
4 NACHO LIBRE MTRCB PG-13 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE — R.V. RUNAWAY VACATION 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00 MTRCB GP

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Shangri-La Plaza

In filmmaking, technology is the portal, not the product

NO DOUBT, DIGITAL FEATURES have helped revive the "dying" Filipino film industry, so undertakings like the 2006 Cinemalaya alternative movie festival should be patronized by all film buffs to further hasten the industry's recovery.

On the other hand, while our digital feature films have been reaping acclaim in festivals abroad, their transfer to mainstream theater screens has generally been less than successful.

Mainstream

Film buffs like them for their freshness and edginess, but the mainstream movie audience appears to be hesitant in warming up to them, possibly because digital productions generally focus on themes, situations and character it can't relate to, and don't feature big and bankable stars.

Digital filmmakers should learn from the sad experience of last year's batch of movies, and deal with more accessible and emphatic subject matter—without diluting their artistic vision.

Otherwise, local films could end up being divided into two separate groups—mainstream and digital—and never the twain shall meet.

This would be a great pity, since mainstream moviegoers should experience the freshness and vigor of digital filmmaking, even as digital features benefit from the mainstream's much larger market.

In addition, digital filmmakers should band together to set up a third movie circuit that is school-based.

We don't mean the occasional on-campus screening but a regular tour of educational institutions involving some 20 digital features going from school to school.

As often as possible, the makers of those digital movies should tour with their films, and talk about them after they're screened.

This would give the digital school circuit an advantage that mainstream cinema doesn't have, and make digital features more appealing and accessible to students and faculty members.

Even as we talk about the present and future of digital movies, however, they're now being challenged by the even less expensive and potentially more pervasive technology of "cell phone films."

Prospects

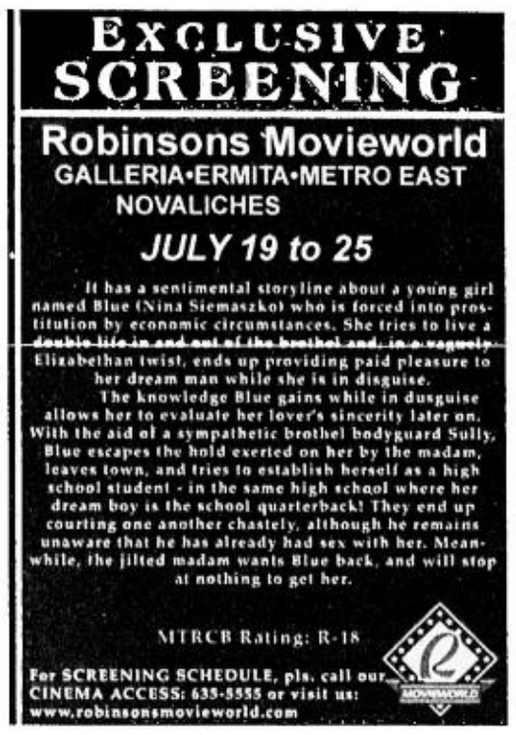
The use of the technology has increased and improved by leaps and bounds. Last year, a contest was held for one-minute cell phone movies; this year, the tilt is for full-length film shot via phone technology. We can only surmise what the prospects for cell phone movies will be in 2007.

But technology is only the portal, not the product, so gifted storytellers will still have to be developed, and taught how to work with these and other new pieces of equipment and processes, before the viewing public can truly benefit from these innovations.

And so, to innovate—and integrate.

Tommy Lee

EVERY Tuesday at 8 p.m., Channel [V] telecasts the new reality show, "Tommy Goes to College," with the famous rocker going back to school (University of Nebraska at Lincoln) after two decades. We trust the new show will inspire other middle-aged people to resume their unfinished studies.



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

ENTERTAINMENT

MONDAY, JULY 24, 2006

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UMA THURMAN

RUSHES

Interviewees with somewhere else to go

THE INTERVIEW WITH SABRINA Baracetti and Thomas Bertacche, Udine (Italy) Film Festival directors, on Page A3-1 was conducted almost literally on the run. Sabrina and Thomas were lugging their suitcases on Thursday afternoon at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Cinemalaya venue.

Why? The Italian movie buffs had just seen "Rotonda" and "Saan Nagtatago si Happiness?" and were on their way not just out of the theater but out of the country, back to Italy. They were also holding review copies of "Kubrador," courtesy of MLR Films producer Joji Alonso.

Remember Flor de Luna?

WE hear that ABS-CBN is planning to resurrect "Flor de Luna," the drama series that launched Janice de Belen's career and adult life. And that GMA 7 is bent on exhuming the rival series, "Anna Lisa."

No way, Juan

NO, RPN 9 says, it will not lend copies of the old "John and Marsha" series to ABS-CBN, which is producing the spin-off "John En Shirley."

Ryan's counterparts

SPEAKING of ABS-CBN... It has cast three hosts for "Pinoy Dream Academy" (airing on Studio 23) which goes head to head with ABC 5's "Philippine Idol," to be hosted by Ryan Agoncillo—solo. The three—described by the Kapamilya network as "hip, free-spirited and multi-talented"—are (from left) Sitti, JC Cuadrado and Bettina Carlos.

LINDSAY LOHAN

COCO MARTIN

FROM left, Sitti, JC Cuadrado and Bettina Carlos.

Not RP, not Pinoy

SPEAKING of "Philippine Idol"... ABC 5's corporate affairs has been instructed to always, always refer to the show as "Philippine Idol"—not "RP Idol" or "Pinoy Idol."

RENE Salud and Marinel R. Cruz JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Our very own

SPEAKING of "Idol" again... during its official launch and blowout for the press on Wednesday, INQUIRER Entertainment's Marinel Cruz was voted "Star of the Night." We're so proud, so proud. (Big smiley here.)

Your own 'Masahista'

GET your own "Masahista"—the movie by Brillante Mendoza is now available on video. Starring newcomer Coco Martin in the title role, "Masahista" was co-winner of the prestigious Golden Leopard award (video division) at the 58th Locarno International Film Festival in Switzerland earlier this year.

Just her luck

LINDSAY Lohan, star of "Just My Luck," was asked, "Are you superstitious?"

Her reply: "No hats on the table. Hats on the bed and hats on the table. I'm psychotic when it comes to hats on the table. For some reason, everyone puts a hat on my bed. I need to put a sign up in my room. It's bad luck I feel like when I don't go by the superstitions, and I leave a hat on the bed, it's all mental."

We take that as a "yes."

Indie days over

LOS ANGELES—Uma Thurman, plays "G-girl" in the new movie "My Super Ex-Girlfriend" about a high-flying, crime-fighting girl who gets dumped by her earthbound boyfriend.

While her work over nearly two decades has ranged from low-budget dramas such as "Henry and June" to flashy musicals like "The Producers," Thurman is best known for offbeat independent fare like Tarantino's "Kill Bill" films. Those days may be over, said Thurman.

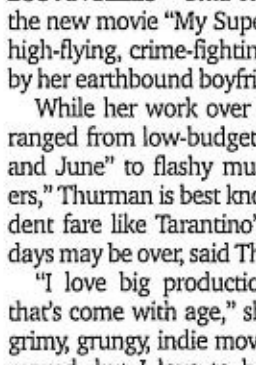
"I love big production values, now. I think that's come with age," she said. "My days of the grimy, grungy, indie movie are over... I love to be moved, but I love to be moved to laugh, too. Maybe I've become a big, soppy sell-out, but I like it." *Reuters*

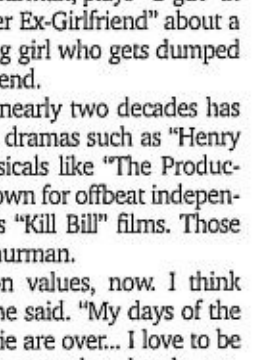
Me, a millionaire?

MEXICO CITY—Mexican big-screen siren Salma Hayek dismissed as nonsense reports that she has a $100-million fortune, and said if she did she would retire and use the money to help the poor.

Local media in Mexico and Latin America reported that the Oscar-nominated actress had been ranked by Fortune magazine as the second-richest Latin American in Hollywood, with nearly half as much money as singer Jennifer Lopez.

"It's a huge lie. It's very, very far from reality," Hayek said. "It's a big like a joke." *Reuters*


JERRY FERRERA


DEBI MAZAR

Smelly sneakers

JERRY Ferrera, the freeloader on HBO's forthcoming series, "Entourage," on being broke in Hollywood: "You wear the same pair of sneakers for two years. Once you get a little bit of money and start doing well, everyone sends you s*** for free. I haven't paid for a pair of sneakers in a year and a half."

Debi Maznar, the publicist on "Entourage," on being the only woman cast member: "I kind of feel like one of the guys on 'Sex and the City.' You see Kim Catrall's boyfriend or David Eigenberg or Mario Cantone, but you can't figure out what they're going to do with them."

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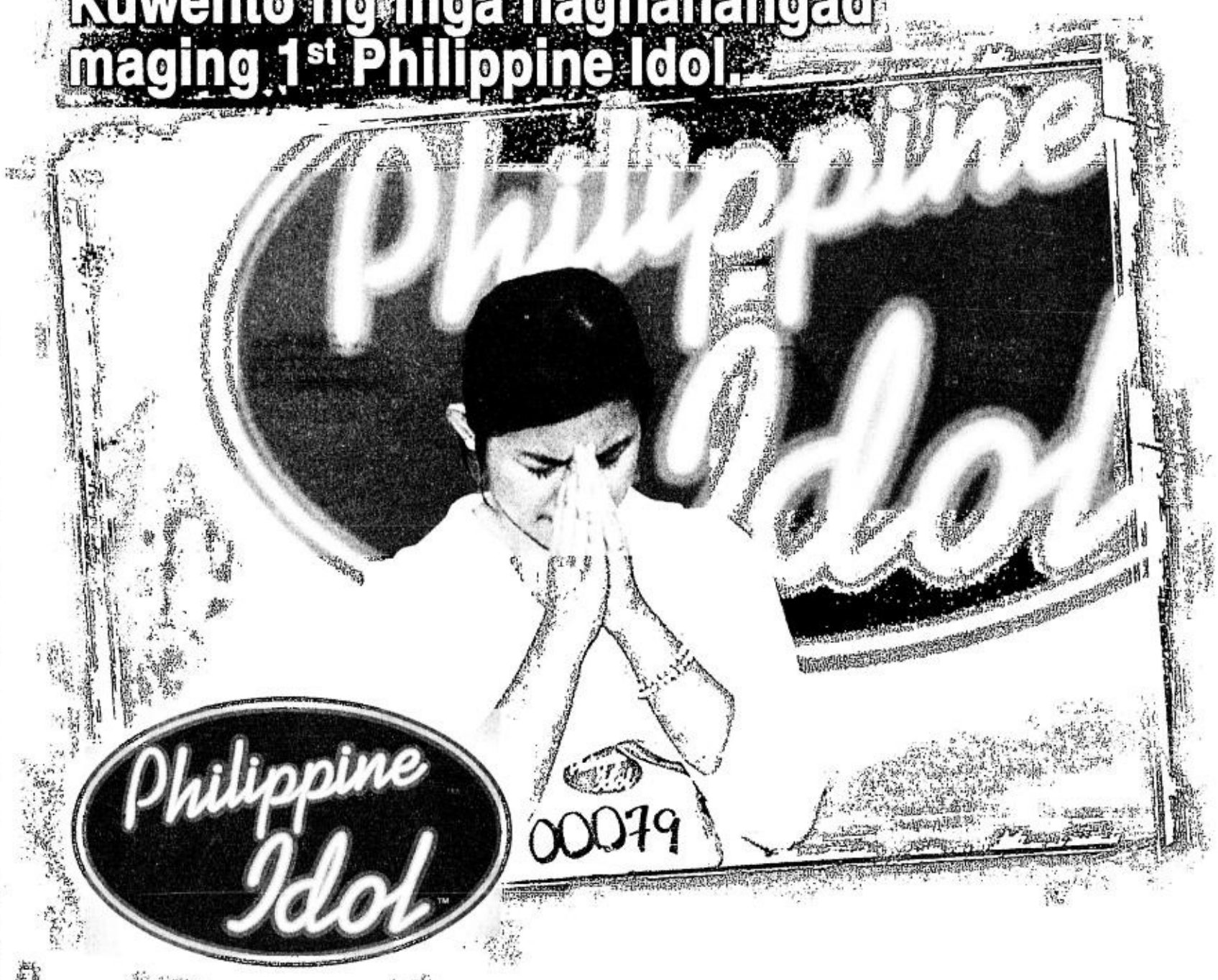

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PAL sees public offering in the horizon

Needs to post profit in '07 to meet PSE rule

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

FLAG CARRIER PHILIPPINE AIRLINES (PAL) MAY consider an initial public offering (IPO) in 2008 should it record profits in 2007, PAL president and chief operating officer Jaime Bautista said Friday.

He said proceeds from a possible IPO may be used to trim down the company's debts or fund future expansion.

Since its corporate rehabilitation was filed before the Securities and Exchange Commission in 1999, PAL has cut its total debt to $1.1 billion from $2.3 billion.

Bautista said PAL registered profits for the the second straight

PAL/B2

HANJIN-GRANDSPAN CONTRACT
Taipan Lucio Tan (middle), Hanjin Heavy Industries Corp.-Phils. Inc. director Yong In Yong, and Granspan Development Corp. president Alfred Tiu view an architect's perspective of Hanjin's sprawling shipbuilding project inside the Subic Freeport in Zambales. Hanjin awarded a P230-million contract to Grandspan to fabricate, build and assemble the steel structure housing the hull shop and assembly line of the shipbuilding facility. Granspan is a member of the Lucio Tan group of companies.

IN THIS ISSUE

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Piracy fight yields 54 convictions /B5

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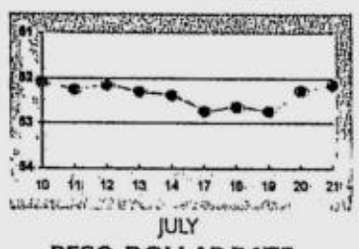

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱52.165 = $1

As of 5 p.m., July 21, 2006

STOCK MARKET

Listless trading seen

THE STOCK MARKET IS EXPECTED TO trade tightly this week over interest rate and geo-political jitters, analysts said.

"There is no strong sense of conviction on either the bullish or bearish side of the aisle. In an undecided market, we should see (weak) turnover," AB Capital Securities wrote in a report.

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Overnight billionaire 2

IT IS BEGINNING TO LOOK LIKE mischievous spirits had run circles around the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals, causing the learned justices to award the 34-hectare Manotok compound behind Ayala Heights, Quezon City, to an unknown claimant.

Read Cocktales, July 21, 2006, for background and then consider these:

- A realtor-wife of a Caloocan City Regional Trial Court judge had been selling lots and bringing prospective buyers to the P1.7-billion compound even while the case was still being heard by the Court of Appeals.
- The realtor-wife and the judge happen to be neighbors of the "overnight billionaire," Teresita Barque-Hernandez, of 9 Pluto St., Greenland Village, Rosario, Pasig City.
- The Greenland Village house that Barque-Hernandez uses is not registered in her name—a detective agency found out that she is merely renting the property—despite her claim to the 34-hectare property and presumably other inheritance.
- A check with the Bureau of Internal Revenue showed no tax account number had been issued to Barque-Hernandez. No employment history or business affiliation is known about her, except that she is being represented by Erap counsel, former Fiscal Jose Flaminiano.
- The Register of Deeds of Quezon City who had initially resisted issuing duplicate papers to support the Barque-Hernandez claim was transferred to Cebu under duress.
- The administrator of the Land Registration Authority, Reynaldo Maulit, under whose tenure the Manotok title was cancelled, is now the lawyer of another private individual who had obtained a title to and is now claiming the 30-hectare Los Baños compound of the Department of Science and Technology.
- And, in a sign of—to be polite about it—judicial inadvertence, both the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court's First Division were unaware that the ownership of the same 34-hectare property had already been upheld in favor of the Manotok family by the Supreme Court way back in July 1984 under GR L-62626.

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

- The Manotok lawyer who appeared in and won that 1984 case is now a Supreme Court justice, Romeo Callejo Sr. Callejo was with the Second Division and apparently was not consulted on the case when the First Division handed down the controversial ruling shortly before last Christmas.
- Just last month, a certain lawyer Lito Abrogar, allegedly with Ayala Land, e-mailed a proposal to banker Edward Go, claiming that a client of his, not Barque-Hernandez, owns the 34-hectare compound and offered P35 million to the Manotoks to ally against Barque-Hernandez.

In return, the Manotoks would give up their claim to their property in favor of the Abrogar client, and would be allowed to continue living in the property for the duration of the court case, this time against Barque-Hernandez.

(Correction: The first name of banker Edward Go's wife, another Manotok heiress, is Pacita, not Rosita, as had been reported in Friday's column.)

Victorias design

THE GROUP of taipan Lucio Tan, which already has three of the 11 board seats in Victorias Milling, is set to acquire the 10.66-percent Osorio block in the country's biggest sugar mill.

About 69 percent of Victorias are already owned by various bank creditors and, according to the grapevine, with the taipan acquiring another block in addition to PNB's 10.15-percent stake, the other banks could finally be persuaded to cede management control of Victorias to the Tanduay group, led by president Wilson Young.

Young already sits in the Victorias executive committee, chaired by another Tan nominee, PNB president Omar Byron Mier.

Heard through the grapevine

THE PANLILIOS of Grand Boulevard Hotel have preempted the impending withdrawal of the state-run Casino Filipino from the hotel by suing Pagcor for alleged renovation costs.

The Manila City Hall, in the meantime, has garnished Grand Boulevard's earnings to cover the hotel's unpaid taxes.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

PAL sees public offering in the horizon

From page B1

year (for its fiscal year ending March 2006) and hoped to comply with the stock exchange's three-year minimum profitability requirement by 2008 for those firms who want to brave the stock market.

However, Bautista declined to disclose financial figures. PAL is set to report its profit performance for its fiscal year ending March 31 before the end of this month.

Bautista said resilient passenger load and efficiency of operations fueled revenues for the company.

PAL reported net operating revenues for the quarter ending December 2005 of $250.8 million, 11 percent higher than the $226.3 million posted a year ago. This was traced to passenger revenue growth of 12 percent to $210.8 million from $187.9 million in the same quarter in 2004.

Bautista, however, said its profit projections would be affected by the increase in fuel prices following surging crude oil costs abroad.

"Under our original projection in 1999, we should be profitable this year. We are collecting a fuel surcharge but considering that fares will affect the appetite of passengers that travel, we cannot just increase fares so we are absorbing a portion of the increase because we cannot collect everything from the passengers," Bautista said.

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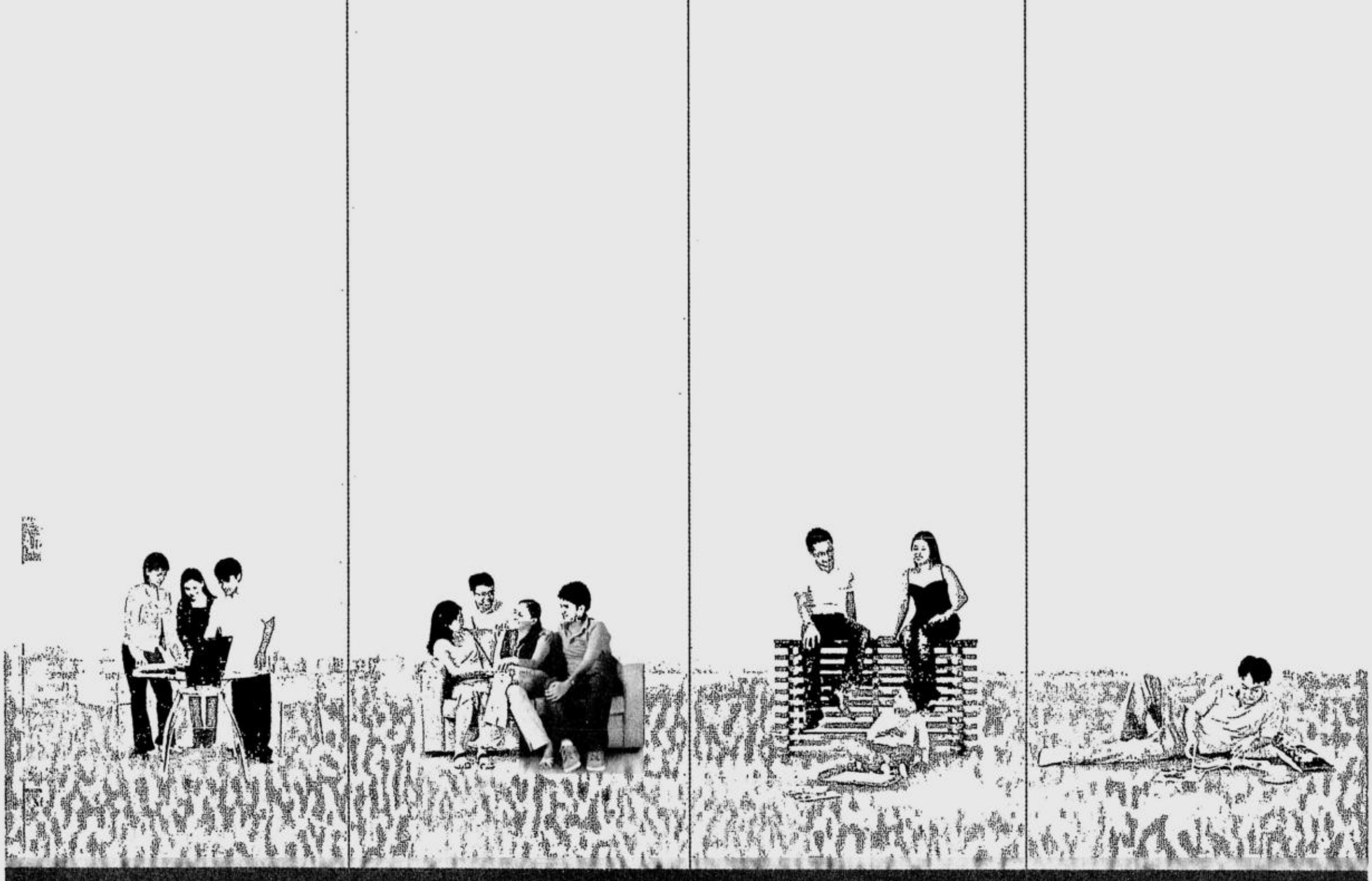

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Tanduay eyes 10.7% stake in VMC

Liquor firm set to buy foundation's shares

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

LIQUOR FIRM TANDUAY HOLDINGS INC. IS looking to buy a 10.7-percent stake in sugar milling giant Victorias Milling Co. Inc.

Tanduay said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange late Friday that its board has authorized chief finance officer Nestor Mendones to bid and negotiate for the acquisition of the shares in VMC held by retirement plan foundation MJOsorio.

The bidding is set for July 28.

The Lucio Tan Group is represented in the country's largest sugar miller by Tanduay Holdings president Wilson Young, Tanduay director and treasurer Mariano Tanenglian and Tan-affiliated bank Philippine National Bank, one of VMC's biggest creditors.

Last year, Tanduay granted a P300-million loan to VMC to help it implement its rehabilitation plan.

It has not, however, decided to convert the loan into shares in the company.

Under VMC's rehabilitation plan which converts a chunk of the loans into equity or shares in the company, VMC reserves a seat for a joint venture partner that has infused capital into the company, six seats for unsecured creditors that have chosen debt conversion, one seat for a secured creditor and three seats for existing shareholders.

Deutsche Bank AG London earlier acquired 36.9 million shares of VMC equivalent to 2.1 percent of the company's outstanding shares.

VMC fell into serious financial difficulties in 1995 due to increased foreign and local competition and losses arising from unprofitable non-sugar business ventures.

These factors resulted in a sharp decline in VMC's net income to P105 million in 1995 from P171 million in 1994.

In 1996, VMC posted a net loss of P243 million and by 1997, at the height of the Asian financial crisis, VMC's losses ballooned to P2 billion.

As a result of its financial woes, VMC failed to settle debt payments to creditors, forcing it to seek debt relief from the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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QUEZON CITY SPORTS	150K	STA. ELENA B	1.4M
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ROCKWELL CLUB CORP	400K	TOWER CLUB C	PLS. CALL
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Calatagan Golf Club "B"	60,000	-
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Canlubang	500,000	400,000
Capitol Hills	55,000	-
Cebu Country Club	1,900,000	1,400,000
Celebrity Sports Club	100,000	-
Club Filipino	100,000	80,000
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Forest Hills "A"	100,000	90,000
Forest Hills "B"	200,000	150,000
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	-
Makati Sports Club "A"	180,000	-
Makati Sports Club "B"	250,000	-
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	12,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	-	11,800,000
Manila Polo	2,900,000	2,700,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	330,000	-
Manila Southwoods "B"	700,000	600,000
Manila Yacht Club	280,000	-
Mimosa (Individual)	220,000	200,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	-	550,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	200,000	-
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	350,000	-
Orchard Golf Club "A"	180,000	150,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	350,000	250,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	400,000	350,000
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Canyon Woods	120,000	-
Capitol Hills	55,000	-
Cebu Country Club	Pls Call	Pls. Call
Celebrity Sports	120,000	90,000
Club Filipino	105,000	-
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	320,000*/Pls Call	Pls. Call*
Eastridge A/B*	Pls Call	-
Evercrest	65,000	-
Fairways & Bluewater	Pls Call	Pls Call
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	100,000/170,000*	Pls Call*
Luisita Golf	Pls Call	300,000
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Manila Polo	Pls Call	2,700,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	Pls Call*	300,000
Makati Sports Club	180,000	160,000
Manila Yacht Club Ind.	300,000	-
Metropolitan Club A/B*	160,000	110,000
Mimosa Ind./C2*/C3**	Pls Call	Pls. Call/500,000**
Mt. Malarayat A	200,000	-
Orchard A/B*/C**	180,000/Pls. Call*/400,000**	150,000/350,000**
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Rockwell Leisure Club	Pls Call	Pls Call
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Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/150,000*	-
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	1,150,000	1,100,000/1,550,000*
Subic Golf	190,000	-
The Palms Country Club	Pls Call	Pls. Call
Tagaytay Country Club	340,000	-
Tagaytay Highlands	680,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	Pls Call	600,000
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Australian firm invests in PNOC Palawan project

By Abigail L. Ho

NIDO PETROLEUM LTD., AN EXPLORATION company listed on the Australian Stock Exchange, has entered into a farm-in agreement with Philippine National Oil Co. for the development of an oil prospect off Palawan.

Under the agreement, Nido will shoulder the entire $8.5-million pre-drill cost, which will cover the acquisition and interpretation of seismic data gathered under Service Contract 58 up to January 2008.

The drilling of an exploration well is scheduled between January 2008 and February 2010.

Nido will get half of SC 58's earnings in exchange for undertaking the agreed work program.

To date, two prospects and six leads have been identified within the contract area.

"The success of this farm-in and the commencement of seismic operation is a significant benchmark for our company and represents a 'coming of age' for the business following our growth and development over the past two years. Nido is now operational," Nido chief operating officer Craig Martin said in a disclosure to the ASX.

SC 58 is adjacent to the Malampaya gas find.

SC 58 is also one of the largest contract areas in the Palawan Basin at 1.344 million hectares.

Nido's participation in SC 58 will boost its gross acreage in the Palawan Basin by 203 percent from 661,997 hectares to 2 million hectares.

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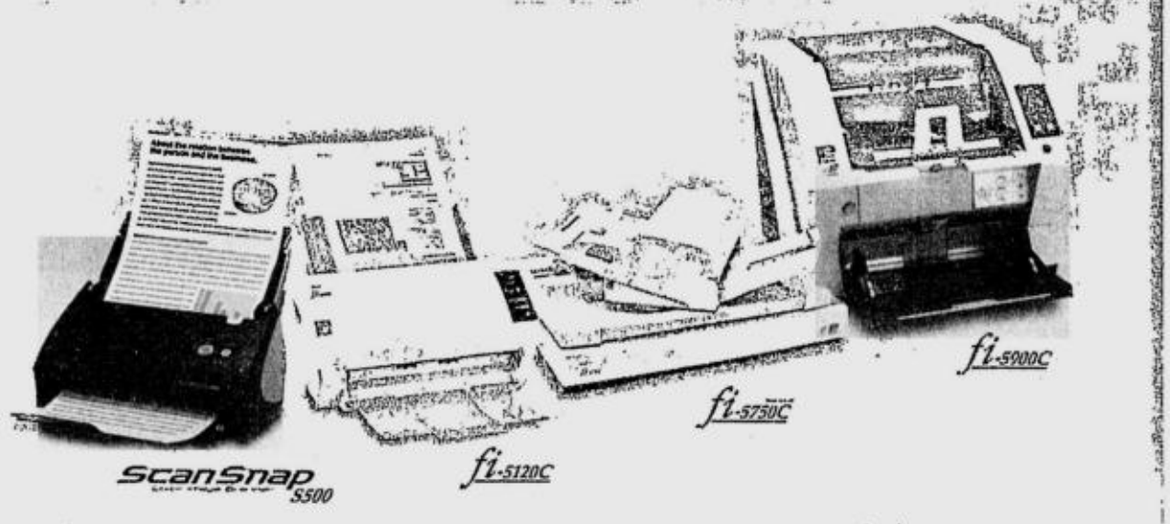

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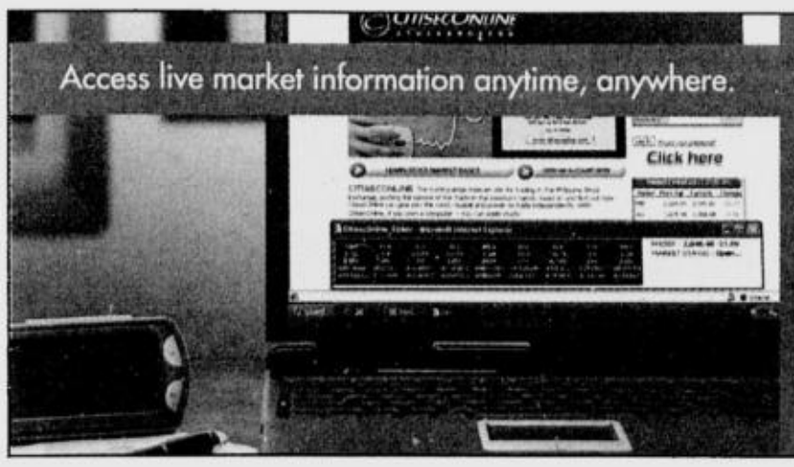

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Bank of the Phil. Islands	51	52	51	51.5	356,300
China Banking Corp.	845	845	845	845	10
Citystate Savings Bank	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	400
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	260,000
Equitable PCI Bank, Inc.	75	77.5	75	77.5	32,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	35.5	36	35	36	151,600
Philippine National Bank	34.5	34.5	34	34	10,200
Phil. Savings Bank	38.5	38.5	38.5	38.5	400
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	18	18	18	18	14,200
Union Bank of the Phil.	44	44	44	44	2,000
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	1.78	1.8	1.76	1.76	457,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	30	30.5	29	30.5	11,400
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	214	214	214	214	10
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1980	1980	1980	1980	240
Ivantage Corp.	1.26	1.28	1.26	1.28	615,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	43.5	43.5	43.5	43.5	101,100
First Phil Hldgs Corp	44.5	44.5	44.5	44.5	1,400
Manila Electric Co. A	15	15	14.75	15	80,400
Manila Electric Co. B	24	24	24	24	404,400
Manila Water Co. Inc.	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	6,596,000
Petron Corp.	4	4.05	4	4	1,750,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.22	0.27	0.22	0.27	1,830,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	120,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	20,000
CADP Group Corp.	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.4	42,000
Cen Azucar de Tarlac	3	3	3	3	2,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23	23.25	23	23	82,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	31.5	32	31	32	120,100
Pancake House Inc.	4.65	4.65	4.65	4.65	40,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.15	3.3	3.15	3.2	1,869,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65.5	66	65.5	66	37,200
San Miguel Corp. B	71	71.5	71	71.5	52,500
Universal Robina Corp.	19	19	18.75	19	407,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.19	0.2	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	1,610,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.5	1.52	1.5	1.52	717,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.55	4.55	4.55	4.55	227,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	20,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIAL					
Global Equities Inc.	0.09	0.11	0.09	0.1	110,500,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	100,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	8,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.007	0.008	0.007	0.0075	177,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.008	28,000,000
Ayala Corp.	400	402.5	397.5	400	116,610
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	1,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.8	1.82	1.8	1.82	795,000
APC Group, Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	500,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	10,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	500,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	3,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	110,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	38,700
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	200,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4.05	4.1	4.05	4.1	2,684,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.9	2.95	2.9	2.9	848,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	34,000
Pacifica	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	5,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.16	0.185	0.16	0.18	5,030,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	50,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.115	0.12	0.115	0.12	7,430,000
SM Investments Corp.	221	222	220	221	60,350
South China Resources Inc	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	190,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.05	0.0575	0.05	0.055	21,400,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	100,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.25	12.5	1,214,800
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	1,000,000
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.04	2,699,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.9	20,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	7,990,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.16	2.22	2.16	2.18	589,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.38	1.48	1.34	1.34	16,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.18	0.225	0.18	0.22	885,950,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.45	5,930,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	30,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	3,783,000
Interport Res.	0.006	0.007	0.006	0.0065	244,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	40,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.77	50,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.205	710,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.4	1.42	1.4	1.42	8,283,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.205	0.21	0.205	0.205	3,150,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	10.75	10.75	10.5	10.75	276,400
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	2,410,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.7	7.8	7.7	7.8	1,065,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	140,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	16	16	16	16	2,300
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	175,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.2	1.2	1.18	1.18	719,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	935	955	935	955	111,690
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.5	788,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1895	1920	1885	1885	127,990
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.17	0.175	0.17	0.175	440,000
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	1,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	1,000,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	135,000
Philweb Corp.	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.032	34,400,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	424,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	14	14	14	14	32,500
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	70,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.36	1.42	1.34	1.38	17,274,000
Manila Jockey Club	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	121,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.195	0.2	0.19	0.19	2,140,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	33,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	10,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.4	8.4	8.3	8.3	2,000
iPeople Inc	3	3.05	3	3	21,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.12	2.14	2.12	2.12	111,000
Paxys Inc.	11	11.25	11	11.25	388,000
Prime Gaming Phils. Inc.	35	35	35	35	90,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	3.8	3.9	3.65	3.75	2,632,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	3.75	3.9	3.65	3.7	1,412,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	234,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.6	264,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	19,280,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	20,670,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	24,900,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	60,100,000
Omico Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.01	.011 4,	551,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	4	4	3.9	3.95	3,214,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4	4	3.9	4	2,115,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26.5	27	26.5	27	6,400
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	300,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	80,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	19,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	2,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.22	1.24	1.22	1.24	236,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.24	1.26	1.22	1.22	519,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	16.25	16.5	16.25	16.25	190,900
PREFERRED					
Ayala Corp. Pref. B	103	105	103	103	16,300
Pldt (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
Pldt (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
Pldt (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
Pldt (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
Pldt 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	600
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	70,000

CURRENCIES

July 24, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.791202	1.000000	52.3830
Japan	Yen	0.006770	0.008556	0.4482
United Kingdom	Pound	1.462537	1.848500	96.8300
Hongkong	Dollar	0.101756	0.128609	6.7369
Switzerland	Franc	0.636270	0.804182	42.1255
Canada	Dollar	0.698509	0.882846	46.2461
Singapore	Dollar	0.498835	0.630477	33.0263
Australia	Dollar	0.594576	0.751484	39.3650
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.098846	2.652731	138.9580
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.210970	0.266645	13.9677
Brunei	Dollar	0.497267	0.628496	32.9225
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000109	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020838	0.026337	1.3796
UAE	Dirham	0.215416	0.272264	14.2620
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.263900	66.2069
Argentina	Peso	0.256883	0.324675	17.0075
Brazil	Real	0.362023	0.457561	23.9684
Denmark	Kroner	0.134036	0.169408	8.8741
India	Rupee	0.016949	0.021422	1.1221
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.215117	0.271887	14.2423
Mexico	New Peso	0.072721	0.091912	4.8146
New Zealand	Dollar	0.492930	0.623014	32.6353
Norway	Kroner	0.126066	0.159335	8.3464
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013130	0.016595	0.8693
South Africa	Rand	0.114088	0.144196	7.5534
Korea	Won	0.000832	0.001051	0.0551
Sweden	Kroner	0.108397	0.137003	7.1766
Syria	Pound	0.015242	0.019264	1.0091
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024191	0.030575	1.6016
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000369	0.000466	0.0244

Piracy fight yields 54 convictions

New case involves gaming CDs

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENSIfied campaign against piracy and counterfeiting of goods has yielded 54 convictions, with the latest involving fake CDs of Sony PlayStation games.

Adrian S. Cristobal Jr., Director General of Intellectual Property Rights Office, credited the achievement to strengthened coordination among the various government agencies engaged in the protection and promotion of IP rights, including the National Bureau of Investigation and judicial courts.

Cristobal said the latest case drew jail terms of at least five years and fines totaling P300,000 for a couple, following a recent ruling of the Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch No. 167 with Judge Alfredo C. Flores presiding.

The case stemmed from two instances of "test buys" conducted by officials of the NBI and Sony's local unit-the first in June 2000 and the second in August 2004. Both occasions confirmed that Lucas-Art was selling bootleg PlayStation games.

Cristobal, whose office closely followed the case, said Loreto Lee and Sally King were each convicted on two counts of copyright and trademark infringement and unfair competition.

Lee and King were both stockholders of Lucas-Art Corp. which used to operate at the Virra Mall Shopping Center in Greenhills, San Juan.

A third accused, Susan Chua, jumped bail, while two others, spouses Johnny Nubla and Emilia Nubla, remain at large.

Cristobal said the court was informed that the husband has already fled to Canada.

"With the court's latest decision, we now have 54 IP cases that resulted in convictions," Cristobal said. "This is an example of the result of the strengthened inter-agency coordination that we have pushed among the agencies of the government," Cristobal said.

He said the inter-agency coordination, and its results, were among the reasons why the Office of the United States Trade Representative removed the country from the Priority Watch List of countries with problems on piracy.

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Flying V seeks perks for ethanol project

By Abigail L. Ho

A GROUP LED BY INDEPENdent oil firm Flying V is seeking perks for a 60,000-liter-a-day ethanol facility that it plans to put up in Mariveles, Bataan.

In a statement over the weekend, Flying V spokesperson Macky Lopez said the group was committed to establishing the P800-million ethanol facility, even though the Biofuels Law was still pending passage.

"Even as we wait for the passage of the Biofuels Law, we at Flying V continue to support the government's alternative fuels program," he said. "We hope foreign investors will partner with us in this endeavor, considering that export opportunities for ethanol are great."

Flying V has filed an application for tax incentives with the Board of Investments.

He said there was no better time than now to shift to alternative fuels such as ethanol as world oil prices continued to rise.

Citing Department of Energy estimates, he said using a 10-percent ethanol blend with gasoline would displace around 565 million liters of gasoline, resulting in annual foreign exchange savings of $354 million.

Flying V started conducting studies on the feasibility of putting up its own ethanol plant last year, at about the same time the oil firm began selling E10, or gasoline blended with 10-percent ethanol.

The idea of building its own ethanol facility stemmed from the fact that there was still no local ethanol supplier and all of the country's ethanol requirements were imported from Brazil, Flying V said.

British firm Bronzeoak Ltd., through local arm Bronzeoak Philippines Ltd., has tied up with National Development Corp. to establish the San Carlos Bio-Energy Inc. plant, an integrated facility that will be able to produce some 100,000 liters of ethanol a day.

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From page B1

Focus is also expected to shift from big-cap blue chips to the more speculative second and third liners.

"The market's mood will most likely remain cautious as the brewing problems in the Middle East are eating up investor confidence," AB Capital Securities said.

Investors are also likely to watch out for President Macapagal-Arroyo's State-of-the-Nation Address this week.

The PSE index managed to gain 1.4 percent last week to end at 2,241.

Comments by Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke in the US Congress, hinting that the Fed might just put a lid on subsequent rate increases, managed to push the market up last week.

Second-quarter earnings are also expected to take the limelight in the coming weeks as companies start reporting first-half profits or losses during the first two weeks of August. AB Capital Securities said indications point to a mixed bag of results for different industries.

"We expect property companies to post strong earnings performance in the second quarter. Early second-quarter sales indications gathered from big real estate players such as Ayala Land Inc., Filinvest Land Inc. and Megaworld Corp. confirm that low- to middle-income residential sales take-up remained healthy given greater overseas Filipino workers' financing," AB Capital Securities wrote.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

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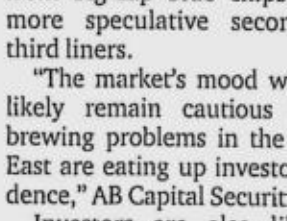
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ATENEO CALLS ON BUSINESS: "Take A Chance On Ourselves, Invest in the Philippines"

THE ATENEO GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS is sounding a call to the business sector to take a chance on our country. At a time when it sees a deepening loss of confidence pervading the country and a growing hesitation from the business sector to invest in the Philippines, the school is encouraging the business sector to reverse the tide, plow back their money into the economy and be a catalyst for national development.

The school makes its call through a Business Leadership Forum on July 27, 2006, entitled "Take A Chance On Ourselves, Invest in the Philippines." The forum will frontally address the issue of loss of confidence in the country and will also serve as kick-off event for the year-long celebration of the AGSB's 40th anniversary.

Invited to speak at the forum are three distinguished speakers whose professional achievements and personal lives are a testimony that the Philippines is worthy of investment: Manuel V. Pangilinan, the Chairman of the Philippine Long-Distance Company, who will speak for and to the business sector, which holds the control knobs of wealth and power and as such, bears the responsibility that this privilege and position imposes on them for the country.

Mr. Antonio P. Meloto, the Executive Director of Gawad Kalinga, will speak for and to citizens who do not belong to business or in government, thereby establishing that indeed the national welfare is the responsibility of every citizen, regardless of his or her professional standing and personal circumstances; and

The Honorable Margarito B. Teves, Secretary of Finance, a proponent for government, will speak for and to the government sector, the one sector with the authority and capacity to create an enabling environment by which all citizens can be moved and mobilized to action in building the nation.

In hosting the forum, the AGSB asserts its role as a learning institution to galvanize all Filipinos towards building the nation and hence declaring that its unique value proposition as a business school is to teach its students that business is not only for profits but for nation building. The over-all theme for its 40th anniversary celebration, "Our Country is *Our* Business," stems from this proposition.

Dr. Alfredo R.A. Bengzon, Dean of the AGSB, says: "As a business school, we have proclaimed a distinctive, if unconventional, value proposition–our country is *our* business. Through this Forum, we proclaim this position to all sectors of society, indeed all citizens, so that we will be mobilized to work together toward building the nation."

Business and media sources estimate that at least 3,000 Filipinos a day leave for overseas work. These are just official statistics, not counting the illegal immigrants. Recent surveys have also indicated that four out of five Filipinos have signified their interest and intent to leave.

However, this is only one side of the picture. Though not as publicized, there are some who have made the decision to stay in the Philippines, confront the concerns in their respective sectors, and make a difference for themselves and their families.

The AGSB Business Leadership Forum creates a platform wherein these leaders from government and the private sector will discuss how they have arrived at their decision, the efforts they are engineering that will hopefully create a societal and economic turn-around, and perhaps even combat the national malaise of despair.

The AGSB Business Leadership Forum will take place on July 27, 2006, 3:00 PM at the Auditorium of the Ateneo Professional Schools Building in Rockwell Center, with web conferencing to AGSB's off-campus sites in Cebu, Sta. Rosa, and Subic. It will be followed by the opening of the AGSB Exhibit in the Atrium at 6:00 PM and cocktails at 6:30 PM.

For more information, contact AGSB at tel. 8985007 or fax 8985006.

Pangilinan

Meloto

Teves

The AGSB Administration Group and Core Faculty. Seated (L-R): Angelita S. Cruz, Administrative Coordinator; Dr. Cesar A. Mansibang, APS Registrar; Dr. Alfredo R.A. Bengzon, Dean, AGSB and VP for Professional Schools; Alberto L. Buenviaje, Associate Dean, AGSB; Winifrida M. Constantino, Economics and Research Cluster Chair; and Dr. Ma. Eufemia C. Yap, MHSA Director. Standing (L-R): Hilda Rita L. Teodoro, Liaison Officer for Student Affairs; Rosauro V. Sibal, Central Management Cluster Chair; Eliseo A. Aureliado, Finance Cluster Chair; Francisco M. Roa, Marketing Cluster Chair; Charlie E. Jorge, IT Manager; Apolinar A. Ng, Operations Cluster Chair; Ricardo R. Palo, Curriculum Coordinator; and Daniel Glenn C. San Luis, CCE/BAP Director

Pangilinan, Meloto and Teves speak at the AGSB forum

Three distinguished speakers have been chosen to give face and voice to the call of the Ateneo Graduate School of Business (AGSB) to take a chance on the country by investing in the Philippines. The speakers were chosen because their life stories are a testimony that economic setbacks are not insurmountable and that investing their resources in the Philippines can bring success and the enduring reward of making a difference for the country.

Manuel "Manny" V. Pangilinan (AB Eco Honors '66), known for catapulting the once burdened PLDT and the fiscally hemorrhaging Piltel into the country's most profitable companies, leads the roster of speakers. Only a few know of his hard-luck childhood which he escaped from through his drive, diligence, and scholarships from high school to a US-based MBA. Trace it to the influence of a public school teacher grandfather who rose to become Secretary of Education, and a father who worked his way up from messenger to bank president.

After 22 years overseas, he turned down a beguiling job offer in London and returned home. "People often ask me why I decided to come back from Hong Kong. Why not stay in Hong Kong and live the comfort of a first-world environment?" Pangilinan said in a speech before the 3rd Global Filipino Networking Convention. "The simple answer is that this is home for me. I believe in the Filipino. I believe in the Filipino of Rizal, Bonifacio and Ninoy Aquino–who all left home and, after having touched the embers of enlightenment, came back... I believe in the Filipino because I know he'll find a way to survive and succeed outside his shores. I believe in the Filipino most of all because of our values."

The second speaker, Antonio "Tony" Meloto (ADMU, AB Eco 1971) of Gawad Kalinga (GK), builds homes for the poor as a means to build community, provide dignity to the poor and offer hope for a country. He believes that empowerment of the poor transforms slums into middle-class communities, sends street children to school, converts the idle into productive citizens, reduces crime, and restores dignity and abundance to the community.

Meloto, whose childhood in a Bacolod squatter community did not stop him from acquiring scholarships and graduating with honors, proclaims, "Filipinos all over the world are looking for a vehicle for change. When you build it, they will come... (in) a span of 2 1/2 years, we have received about a billion in terms of donations coming from all over the world..." Secretary of Finance Margarito "Gary" B. Teves (ADMU, GS '56, HS '60) will discuss the government's current programs designed to create a decent living environment for Filipinos. His standing in the local and international communities alike is impeccable.

As head of Land Bank of the Philippines, Teves turned it into the country's third largest bank, while stirring it back to its mandate of catering to the small businesses, farmers, fishermen and agri-business. As a three-term congressman representing the 3rd District of Negros Oriental, his economic reform laws liberalized the banking system to allow the entry of foreign banks. Among his legislative accomplishments are laws reforming the banking sector and capital market, the Magna Carta for Small Enterprises, and laws providing safety nets for the agricultural sector.

"Teves Speaks", a compilation of talks he gave in Land Bank, states his firmly held beliefs that you could "start from your own nook and become agents of change" by developing a passion for excellence, challenging the system, and striving to leave a legacy.

Even as it has chosen these speakers, the AGSB recognizes that there are many more who can provide face and voice to its call. It is committed to provide other platforms for the many others who do so.

AGSB at 40: The educational institution as nation builder

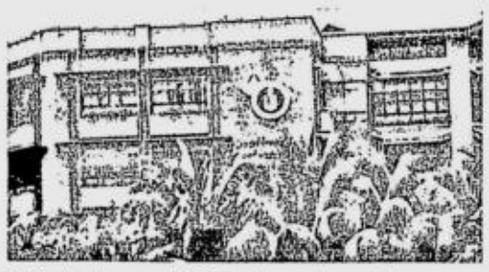
The Ateneo Graduate School of Business (AGSB) has come a long way since it was established in 1966. Today, the AGSB enjoys the largest market share of business school students (at twenty-three percent of total market) and is ranked as the number one graduate school of business based on an evaluation of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE). The school counts among its graduates influential leaders in financial services, government institutions, military, information technology, education, healthcare, and manufacturing. More significantly, the school is also proud of the many graduates who come from staff and supervisor positions–the men and women who comprise and run the engines that drive the companies and the economy at large.

The AGSB has gained the attention and recognition of different sectors. It received the Thomas Kennedy Award for New Ventures of Regis University, besting all other Regis-partner business schools in the world. It is now top of mind for MBA institutional markets (these include ADB, Nestle, Intel, Zilog, Allied Bank, WG&A, The Medical City, TESDA, RBAP, Cooperative Institute, Victoria Court, and more). And it now enjoys the best image among potential MBA students (based on a survey by PSRC).

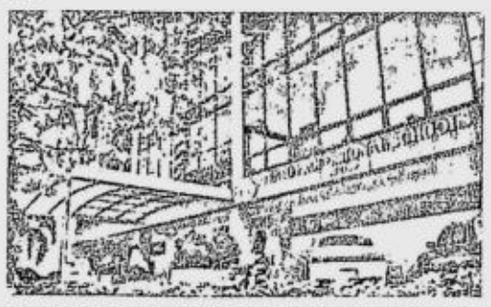
In its forty years of history, the AGSB has established a strong commitment to the development, fielding and nurturing of corporate leaders and managers who are principle-centered, service-oriented and equipped with the fundamental skills and a developed proficiency of effective management. Students from the AGSB integrate the ethical dimensions of their personal and professional lives in theory and practice with the technical and political aspects of their career.

It emphasizes academic excellence and a continuing, updated response to the challenges of technology and global competition. At the same time, it upholds that strength of character is an essential foundation on the above objectives can be accomplished.

The long history of the AGSB is a story of the trials and tests that an institution goes through to find the best way to deliver academic excellence. It is also the story of how staying committed to a vision of service pushes an institution to constantly ask what it can do for the country.



The Rockwell campus of AGSB stands as an educational institution that is responsive to the market while maintaining its competitive edge



The AGSB campus at H.V. dela Costa St. in Salcedo Village, Makati continues to serve the needs of workplace-based students

The old AGSB campus at Padre Faura, Manila, where budding businessmen learned the ropes in the Ignatian spirit

•The Preparatory Years (1960-1966). Graduate school education in the Ateneo de Manila University started in 1948 with the establishment of the Ateneo Graduate School, granting graduate degrees in the area of Liberal Arts, a longstanding tradition in the University.

•The Foundation and Beginning Years (1966-1981). The AGSB was formally established in 1966, the first foray of the Ateneo de Manila University into the so-called "practitioner" world of professionals, business people and corporate workers. During these early years, much of the focus was on ensuring the school's survival and the running of day-to-day affairs.

•The Turbulent Years (1981-1985). During this period, crisis, conflicts, and the possibility of closure hit the AGSB. The organization suffered a loss of confidence springing from a gnawing doubt about its ability to deliver academic excellence. The school was in the process of defining itself –its values, norms and mission. Faculty, students and alumni, however, clamored for the school to stay open, and pointed to the fact that it was serving a need of workplace-based students to improve their capacity.

•The Survive and Maintain Years (1985-1993). This period was characterized by efforts to maintain order and to make the school survive. It was during this time that the Institute of Banking was established and The Master in Hospital Administration Program revived.

•The Revitalization Years (1993-present). During this period, the AGSB looked squarely at its performance, asking itself the tough question that would shape its future. Consequently, it embarked on two main tracks of development. The first is the Program Track dealing with how the AGSB functions as a business school that is responsive to the market and is at par or even better than its competitors. Second is the equally important Branding Track which concerns itself with how the AGSB can connect with its identity and character as sources of inspiration, mission and forward movement.

The result of this 40-year journey is a school that has not only proven its leadership in the field of graduate studies, but is now looking beyond its success to see how it can be of greater service to the students it serves, the University it draws identity from, and the country it belongs to. It defines its role in society through the value proposition that business is not for profit alone but for nation building.

Moving towards the future, the AGSB has positioned itself to respond to the concerns of a country that is grappling with the realities of a constantly changing, information-driven global village, by strengthening the education that is distinctly Ateneo, which is characterized by upgraded skill and technological development, critical analysis, focus on leadership, a drive for excellence, workplace relevance, and a solid ethical foundation.

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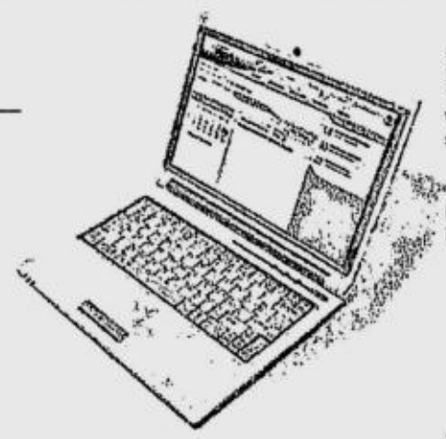

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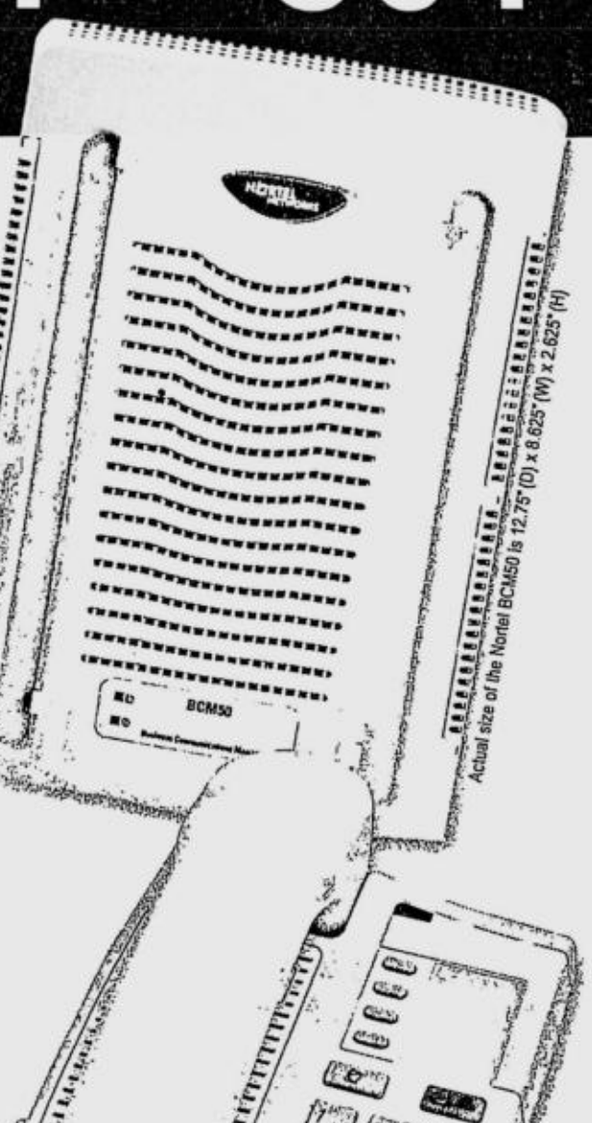

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ZENMAR MKT.	133	CRISTINA MOLINA	Zenmar Mkt. G.T. de Leon Val.
MARULAS MKT.	134	EDUARDO ANGELES	Marulas Mkt. Val. City
KARUHATAN MKT.	135	BERNARDO VERGARA	Karuhatan Mkt. Val.
	136	WILMA ARIAR	Karuhatan Mkt., Val.
MAPULANG LUPA TAL.	137	DANICA AGUSTIN	Mapulang Lupa Tal.
	138	DOLORES VINAS	Mapulang Lupa Tal.
BISALAO TALIPAPA	139	YOLANDA TIONGSON	Gen. Luis cor Bisalao, Bagbaguin
	140	MILA SORIANO	E. Mariano St., Bagbaguin
MANILA			
ABUCAY MKT.	1	WENCESLAO DELA CRUZ	Abucay Mkt., Tondo
	2	ROMULO ROJO	S# 124 & 528 Abucay Mkt., Tondo
	3	LAUREL DELA CRUZ	Hermosa St., Abucay Mkt., Tondo
BANGKUSAY MKT.	4	ANTONIO PORNEA	Bangkusay Mkt. F. Varona, Tondo

NAME OF MARKET		NAME OF OPERATOR	ADDRESS/LOCATION
MANILA			
	5	JESSELITO PORNEA	Bangkusay Mkt. F. Varona, Tondo
	6	MYRNA VILLANO	Bangkusay Mkt. F. Varona, Tondo
G PERFECTO TALIPAPA	7	MIGUEL DELA PAZ	1567 G Perfecto Talipapa, Tondo
	8	DEXTER NABATA	1573 G Perfecto Talipapa, Tondo
HAPPYLAND TALIPAPA	9	MARINA CONAY	Happyland Talipapa Tondo
KATUPARAN TALIPAPA	10	RUTH BAVILLONA	101 Bldg 10 Vitas Katuparan Talipapa, Tondo
	11	REYNALDO PETRAN	Bldg 12 Katuparan Talipapa, Vitas, Tondo
KAGITINGAN TALIPAPA	12	AGUSTIN CUSAY	Kagitingan Talipapa
MABUHAY TALIPAPA	13	NANCY NABOR	3281 Rizal Ext, Villarama Plaza, Tondo
MAGSAYSAY MARKET	14	DANILO GATUS	Magsaysay Mkt., Tondo
	15	TRANQUILINO RICARDO	031 Magsaysay Talipapa Don Bosco Tondo
	16	DANTE ILAO	117 Magsaysay St., Tondo
MORIONES TALIPAPA	17	MERLITA CHUA	278 Moriones Talipapa Tondo
	18	MACARIO LACSON	268 Moriones Talipapa Tondo
PAVIA MARKET	19	VIOLETA ANGCOT	537 Pavia St. Pavia Mkt., Tondo
	20	ARACELI MENDOZA	S# 22-23 Pavia Mkt., Tondo
PRITIL MARKET	21	REMEDIOS SUMINTAC	S# 546-547 Pritil Mkt., Tondo
	22	VICTORINO ALAS	S# 83-87 Pritil Mkt., Tondo
	23	M.C. DE JESUS	S# 19 Pritil Mkt., Tondo
	24	CECILIA PONS	S# 109 Pritil Mkt. Tondo
	25	CHRISTOPHER REAPOR	Pritil Mkt.
ROMUALDEZ TALIPAPA	26	MARGARITA CANTOS	88 Roxas St., Magsaysay Vill (infront of Romualdez Tal.
	27	LUISITO REYES	Romualdez Talipapa
STO. NIÑO TALIPAPA	28	LOLITA FLORES	9C Herbosa St., Sto. Niño Talipapa Tondo
	29	JULIET CAMA	Sto. Niño Talipapa, Manila
TEMP HOUSING TAL.	30	POLLY NOSORO	Bgy 105 Bldg 22 Unit 40 Vitas Temp Housing Tal.
	31	RAMIL MALLARI	Temp Housing Talipapa Vitas Tondo
ZARAGOSA TALIPAPA	32	DIONISIO JUSPER	432 Zaragosa St., Tondo
MA GUIZON TALIPAPA	33	RICARDO ANORICO	782 Ma Guizon Talipapa Tondo
	34	JOSE LANDICHO	725 Laong Nasa St., M. Guizon Talipapa Tondo
PAMPANGA MKT.	35	ANGELES REYES	S# 170-171 Pampanga Mkt.
PERMANENT HOUSING/SMACAI	36	JOVENDINO ROXAS	Bldg 26 Unit 15 Permanent Housing Tondo (infront of SMACAI mkt.)
	37	CECILIA SILVA	232 Rodriguez St., SMACAI Talipapa Tondo
WAGAS MARKET	38	NARCISO CALONSO	312 Lakandula Wagas Mkt. Tondo
	39	MEDEN CADULDULAN	S# 165-168 Wagas Mkt. Tondo
YUSECO TALIPAPA	40	RICKLY UMALI	1205 Yuseco Talipapa Tondo
ARRANQUE MARKET	41	ARSENIA CHAN	S# 337-342 Arranque Market Sta. Cruz
	42	BELY TOLENTINO	S# 318 Arranque Market Sta. Cruz
BAMBANG MARKET	43	LOURDES CAPULONG	S# 764-767 Bambang Market Sta Cruz
	44	FLORENCIA DE JESUS	1404 Bambang St., Sta. Cruz Mla.
	45	ROY CAPUNO	S# 837-40 Bambang Market Sta. Cruz, Mla.
BLUMENTRITT MARKET	46	CORAZON CERVANIA	2466 M. Natividad St., Sta. Cruz
CENTRAL MARKET	47	FRANCO SANTOS	816-20 Central Market, Sta Cruz
	48	ROSEMARIE TAGLE	Pas# 4 Central Market, Sta. Cruz
	49	ZENAIDA LAZARO	Pas# 12 Central Market, Sta. Cruz
	50	RICARDO DELA CRUZ	1033 P. Guevarra St., Sta. Cruz Manila
	51	LIONILA TORRES	S# 1909-1912 Pas 12 2nd Bldg Central Mkt.
DIVISORIA MALL	52	ROGELIO BONGOT, JR.	S# 2-5 New Divisoria Mall Divisoria, Binondo
	53	RICARDO POSADAS	S# 22 New Divisoria Mall Binondo, Mla.
NEW ANTIPOLO TALIPAPA	54	MINDA VALDEZ	1675 New Antipolo Mkt. Sta. Cruz Manila
QUINTA MARKET	55	MILAGROS CRUZ	S# 1193-96 Quinta Mkt. Palanca St., Quiapo
	56	EUGINE SOLIMAN	S# 1198-1200 Quinta Mkt. Palanca St., Quiapo
	57	QUIAPO PUB. MKT. DEV'T. COOP	Pas# 7, Quinta Mkt. Palanca St., Quiapo
	58	JEFFREY REYES	S# 7, Quinta Mkt. Palanca St., Quiapo
	59	MYRA CRUZ	S# 1202-1205 Quinta Mkt. Palanca St., Quiapo
R PAPA TALIPAPA	60	YOLANDA DIMALANTA	3427 F Roxas St. Bo. Obrero (Vicinity of R Papa Tal.)
TAMBUNTING TALIPAPA	61	ALBERTO SALAZAR	1284 Tambunting Talipapa Sta. Cruz
	62	ANTONIO SALAZAR, JR.	1281 Tambunting Talipapa Sta Cruz
KUNDIMAN MARKET	63	FLORENCIA DE GUZMAN	303 Kundiman Market Sampaloc
LORETO MARKET	64	MA. TERESITA QUINTANA	Loreto Market Sampaloc
MARZAN TALIPAPA	65	ROSEMARIE ENERO	736 J Marzan St., Sampaloc
SAMPALOC MARKET	66	NENA DIMASAKA	S# Bustillos Market, Sampaloc Mla.
	67	REYNALDO MECLAT	Stall 23-24 Pasilio 4 Sampaloc Mkt.
TRABAJO MARKET	68	LEONARDO DELA CRUZ	Stall 67-70 Trabajo Market, Sampaloc
	69	FERRY DOCTOR	Stall 81-84 Trabajo Market Sampaloc
	70	LEAH DELA CRUZ	S# 192-195 Trabajo Market Sampaloc
BASECO TALIPAPA	71	LUZVIMINDA GATUS	Blk. 17 Baseco Talipapa
	72	ALFREDO RUEZ	Blk. 14 Baseco Talipapa Port Area
DAGONOY MARKET	73	CECILIA BARRIOS	S# 142-144 Dagonoy Market
	74	Michael Javier	Dagonoy Market San Andres
	75	Milagros Madrid	17 Dagonoy Market
	76	Nelson Rocillo	197 Dagonoy Mkt., San Andres
MAGRE COM'L CENTER	77	BOBBY MONTOYA	Stall 31 Magre Commercial Ctr. Paco
PACO MARKET	78	NATIVIDAD APRENTADO	S# 436-439 Paco Pub. Mkt.
	79	CELIA RAFOLS	S# 490-493 Paco Pub Mkt.
SAN ANDRES MARKET	80	JOEL APARRI	S# 133-136 San Andres Market
	81	EDITHA CASTRO	S# 232-33 San Andres Market
ZAPANTA TALIPAPA	82	LEONIDA RICO	1157 Zapanta Talipapa Singalong
BO KAPAMPANGAN TAL.	83	ERLINDA DIMATULAC	1572 Bo Kapampangan Talipapa Sta. Ana.
ESTRADA TALIPAPA	84	LOUBETH NIPUEN	Pasigline cor Estrada Talipapa Sta. Ana
PUNTA TALIPAPA	85	ERLINDA OLMP	1700 Rd 1 Bagong Silang Punta Tal., Sta. Ana
	86	DANIELA VILLABITO	1701 Rd 1 Bagong Silang Punta Tal., Sta. Ana
STA ANA MARKET	87	LUALHATI OLMO	S# 194-195 Sta Ana Market
	88	MYLINE PORNEA	Stall 187 Sta Ana Market
	89	ERLINDA DIMATULAC	1572 Bo. Kapampangan, Sta Ana
	90	JONALYN MAYOR	Stall 166 Sta Ana Market
PAMILIHANG SENTRAL NG STA MESA	91	MELODINA SUYAT	Pamilihang Sentral ng Sta. Mesa
PASIGLINE TALIPAPA	92	ERWIN DENOSTA	2469 Pasigline Talipapa Punta Sta Ana
STA MESA MARKET	93	RUEL CELSO	3548 DR Magsaysay Blvd Sta Mesa Mkt
ZAMORA MARKET	94	MARITESS BAYUDANG	S# 25 Zamora Market Pandacan
	95	ANGEL LAURENTE	Zamora Market Pandacan
SAN JUAN			
AGORA PUB. MARKET	1	MARIA PACHECO	S# 119 Agora Pub. Market San Juan
WEST CRAME MARKET	2	EISEO DEMONTEVERDE	33 H Rd 1st West Crame San Juan
QUEZON CITY			
ARNO MARKET	1	HONORATO SERIAL	Arno Market Abra St., Proj. 8
BAGO BANTAY TALIPAPA	2	LAYLANEE SALENGA	90-C Antique St Bago Bantay
BAHAY TORO TALIPAPA	3	ARIS LAHOM	102 San Jose St., Bahay Toro
BEDICOR MARKET	4	CELIA IGNACIO	A15 Bidecor Market Balintawak
	5	MONTE IGNACIO, JR.	C12 Bidecor Market Balintawak
FAMILY PUB. MARKET	6	FABIAN DAYANGHIRANG	S# 53 Family Pub. Mkt Balintawak
	7	ANA AZUR	S# 36 Family Pub Mkt. Balintawak
FERNANDO DEL ROSARIO MARKET	8	VILMA PANGANIBAN	Fernando Del Rosario Mkt. rd 3 Proj 6
FRISCO MARKET	9	TEODORO ARANO	S# 34 Frisco Market
	10	BERNADETTE DAYANGHIRANG	S# 58 Frisco Mkt.
	11	RICARDO HONGAYO	13 C-Section Frisco Market
	12	JOHN NALUS	S# 14 Dry Goods Section Frisco Market
GAIETY MART	13	LICINA REYES	S# Gaiety Mart Balintawak
INT. SANTIAGO TALIPAPA	14	RAMON ESPEDILLA	Int. Santiago Talipapa Bgy San Antonio
KANLAON DEL MONTE MKT	15	DANTE PADILLA	S# 3 Kanlaon del Monte MKt.
MAUBAN TALIPAPA	16	RAMON GARCIA	21 Mauban Talipapa Manresa
MUÑOZ MARKET	17	JULIANITO NALUZ	S# 47 Muñoz Market
	18	PAUL JAMES PASTORIZA	S# VIII-18 Muñoz Market EDSA
PAG-ASA TALIPAPA	19	MARILYN PANGANIBAN	40 Rd 7B Pag-asa
PROJ. 6 MARKET	20	CORAZON VIOLA	S# 14 Proj. 6 Market
SAN JOSE MARKET	21	MA ENCARNITA CANG	S# 1&2 San Jose Market Mayon
STO. NIÑO TALIPAPA	22	HERMANIA CLAVERIA	32 Blk A Sto Niño Talipapa
SUPER PALENGKE	23	MATEO UNTALAN	S# 3 Proj. 8 Super Palengke Sangandaaan
	24	ROLANDO VALDERAMA	S# C-4 Super Palengke Proj. 8
	25	ALI VICENTE	CTM# 3 Super Palengke Proj 8
ADARNA FLEA MARKET	26	RICHARD BAYANI	Adarna Flea Mkt Adarna St Unit 5 Prk 14
	27	MA SHEILA PAÑA	Adarna Flea Mkt Adarna St Unit 5 Prk 14
AB MART	28	RAMON STA MARIA	S# 4 AB Mart 1007 Quirino Hi-way
AIRFORCE RD TALIPAPA	29	VILMA ANGELES	Airforce Rd Talipapa
ALCOBA MARKET	30	ALEJANDIA ALCOBA	Alcoba Market Lagro
BAGONG SILANGAN TALIPAPA	31	HILDA PRIMICIAS	21 Genyengko St., Bagong Silangan
CAMPO PAYATAS TALIPAPA	32	JANET ALMEDRAL	Sn Juan Bautista Campo Payatas A
DON FABIAN TALIPAPA	33	CIPRIANO LIBERATO	2 San Juan Bautista Payatas (Campo Tal.)
ES EM WET & DRY MARKET	34	DIONGO QUIRINO	226 Don Fabian Bo. Commonwealth
	35	YOLANDA MICAYAS	95 A Zabarte Rd. Novaliches

NAME OF MARKET		NAME OF OPERATOR	ADDRESS/LOCATION
QUEZON CITY			
FAIRVIEW MARKET	36	MARK PERALTA	S# 90 Fairview Wet & Dry Market
	37	FELISA MADEJA	S# 22 Fairview Wet & Dry Market
FERIA RD TALIPAPA	38	GERARDO ALMOJANO	No 1 Republic St Homesito Feria Rd Old Balara
GULOD TALIPAPA	39	PEDRO DAÑO, JR.	35 Sin St. Gulod Talipapa
HOLY SPIRIT TALIPAPA	40	OLIVER APAL	13 St Vincent St Talipapa Holy Spirit
	41	ELEANOR RODRIGUEZ	22-A BF Homes Rd Holy Spirit
	42	DELIA GERARCAS	62-C Sto Domingo Holy Spirit
KASIYAHAN TALIPAPA	43	SARAH BASAS	2 Kasiyahan Talipapa Batasan Hills
KAUNLARAN TALIPAPA	44	FLORANTE CONTRERAS	19 Kaunlaran Talipapa, Bgy. Commonwealth
	45	GERARDO RAZON	7 Kaunlaran St Commonwealth Market
LITEX IBP TALIPAPA	46	GENALYN CURIANO	036 IBP Rd cor Litex Commonwealth
	47	NILA LAGONOY	32 IBP Rd cor Litex Commonwealth
LP URBAN TALIPAPA	48	JOEY CONTAOL	Stall B Ph 1 Payatas B LP Urban Talipapa
LUPANG PANGAKO TALIP	49	LEIZEIL CABRERA	Phase 1 Blk 9-Lot 5 Lupang Pangako Payatas
	50	ALLAN DE LA CERNA	Phase I Lupang Pangako Payatas
	51	JENNIFER SANDOVAL	B2 P3 Lupang Pangako Payatas
	52	PEDRO SANDOVAL	B19 P1 Lupang Pangako Payatas
LUZON AVE., GITNA TALIPAPA	53	AURORA KILALA	10C Area 9, Luzon Ave., Luzon Ave Talipapa
LUZON DULO TALIPAPA	54	ANTONIO UNTALAN	70 Purok 3 Luzon Ave-Gitna Talipapa
MANGGAHAN TALIPAPA	55	VILMA CASTILLO	347 Commonwaelth Manggahan Talipapa
	56	RAMON BOMBAY	346 Manggahan Talipapa, Commonwealth
MINDANAO AVE MARKET	57	DALISAY SIAWINGCO	Mindanao Ave Market
N-MART MARKET	58	ROSARIO DELA PEÑA	N-Mart Novaliches
	59	REYNALDO TOLENTINO	N-Mart Novaliches
NAWASA TALIPAPA	60	MONALISA MARIANO	148 Nawasa Side Pasong Tamo
NEW BONIFACIO MARKET	61	NOEL LOYOLA	Bonifacio Market, Novaliches, Quirino Hi-way Nova
LD BALARA TALIPAPA	62	LORETO BARREDA	761 Old Balara Talipapa Tandang Sora Ave Old Balara
	63	CAYETANO FLORES	761 Old Balara Talipapa Tandang Sora Ave Old Balara
PAYATAS A SAN JUAN BAUTISTA TAL.	64	LIBERATO CIPRIANO	2 San Juan Bautista, Campo Payatas
PRESIDENTIAL TALIPAPA	65	MARINA BARTE	10 Presidential Talipapa Batasan Hills
	66	FLORDELIZA MAURO	22 Presidential Talipapa Batasan Hills
	67	RAYMUNDO PUZON	16-B Pres. RD Batasan Hills
REPUBLIC AVE TALIPAPA	68	GEMMA LARIBA	233 Republic Ave, Talipapa, Holy Spirit
RIVERSIDE TALIPAPA	69	ERLINDA GARCIA	115 Riverside St Commonwealth
	70	JULIANA ROBIATO	Riverside Talipapa Commonwealth
	71	LEAVIGILDA SANDOVAL	924 Riverside St Commonwealth
SAUYO TALIPAPA	72	KABALIKAT SA SERBISYO TUNAY	6 Kabuhayan Ctr Sauyo Market Novaliches
SEMINARY TALIPAPA	73	SHIELA DELOS REYES	Seminary Talipapa Bagbag Novaliches
SITIO MENDEZ TALIPAPA	74	MARIDEL CARANTO	B3 L5 Sitio Mendez Talipapa Baesa
SITIO VETERANS TALIPAPA	75	MARITES AGUILAR	Eagle St Sitio Veterans Talipapa Bagong Silangan
STA LUCIA MARKET	76	BERNABE ABANADOR	26 JP Rizal, Sta Lucia Nova
STA QUITERIA TALIPAPA	77	LEONIDA GARCIA	6B 31 Sta Quiteria Market Tandang Sora
TALANAY TALIPAPA	78	LALAINE OSTOLAN	91 Kagawad Rd Area B Talanay Talipapa
	79	MERNILO RODRIGUEZ	97C Session Rd, Talayan Market
TALIPAPANG GALA-BATASAN	80	IMELDA VELIGARIA	100 Batallion St Talipapang Gala-Batasan Hills
TANDANG SORA MARKET	81	DANIEL MENDOZA	S# 37 Tandang Sora Mkt.
	82	ROSALIA RIVERA	Tandang Sora Talipapa
TIERA PURA MARKET	83	BARY ACE RODRIGUEZ	1125 B. Tierra Pura Mkt. Tandang Sora
VILLA SABINA TALIPAPA	84	GENEIVIVE SERRRANO	1 JP Ramoy St Villa Sabina Complex Talipapa Nova.
VISAYAS WET & DRY MARKET	85	MARY ANN MAGNO	L5 Visayas Wet & Dry Market cor Visayas Ave.
	86	TERESITA PUYAT	S#27 Wet & Dry Market Visayas Ave cor T. Sora
AURORA MARKET	87	KONSTANTINE CONSTANTINO	Aurora Market, Aurora Blvd
	88	RICHARD RUELAN	S# 20-25 Blk 4 Aurora Market Proj. 4
KAINGIN I TALIPAPA	89	ANGELINA PULIDO	Blk II Kaingin I Bgy Pansol
KAINGING II TALIPAPA	90	MARGARITO DIZON	44 Kaingin II Pansol
MURPHY MARKET	91	BONIFACIO RILLON	Semi-Permanent Annex Murphy Mkt., Cubao
	92	MARIA RILLON	S# 12 Murphy Market, Cubao
NEPA Q-MART	93	RAMON SANER	Pas#N Alley III-Nepa Q-Mart
PROJECT 2 MARKET	94	ARNALDO VIROLA	S# 6,7 & 8 Proj. 2 Market
	95	TERESITA VIROLA	S#210-211 Proj 2 Market
PROJ. 4 MARKET	96	ARMEL CUMPAS	1 Lakandula St., Proj. 4 Market
ROXAS PUB. MARKET	97	OLIVER APOR	50 Azucena Roxas Market
	98	MICHELLE BARCELONA	Misc Sec Roxas Pub. Market
AGHAM ROAD	99	ELIEZER DE ASIS	273 Rosal St Agham rd
DAMAYANG LAGI	100	EVELYN GAMIT	E Rodriguez Sr. Damayang Lagi
GALAS MARKET	101	DIANA JOY AGAPITO	S# 92 Galas Market San Isidro, Galas
	102	LOLINE MANABO	S# 65 Galas Market, San Isidro Galas
	103	NENITA ROSALES	S#77 Glas Market, San Isidro, Galas
	104	DOMINGA MALQUESTRO	S#50 Galas Market, san Isidro Galas
KALAYAAN PLAZA MARKET	105	DOMINGO LEGASPI	S# 9 Kalayaan Plaza Mkt Masigla Ext Diliman
KAMUNING PUB. MARKET	106	ZENAIDA CUNANAN	142-143 Kamuning Pub. Market
	107	CRESENCIA SARIO	S# 25-26 Kamuning Market Kamuning
	108	LITA SISON	Stall 27-28 Kamuning Pub. Market
OLD CAPITOL SITE TALIPAPA	109	RAUL VALENZUELA	41 Dahlia St Zone 4 Old Capitol Site Talipapa Diliman
TAMASCO MARKET	110	JERWIN MATURAN	Stall 14 Tamasco Market
	111	ROSALIE PANEDA	Tamasco Market

NAME OF MARKET		NAME OF OPERATOR	ADDRESS/LOCATION
BACOOR			
MOLINO WET & DRY MKT.	1	MAREBEL GUPIT	Molino II, Bacoor
ADDAS II, TALIPAPA	2	LORETA EVANGELIO	Addas II, Molino II, Bacoor
CAVITE CITY			
CAVITE CITY PUB. MKT.	3	CATALINA LOYOLA	Cavite City, Cavite
KAWIT			
BINAKAYAN PUB. MKT.	4	NENITA ONG	Kawit, Cavite
ROSARIO			
ROSARIO PUB. MKT.	5	MARIO MANLICLIC	Rosario, Cavite
CARMONA			
CARMONA PUB. MKT.	6	MINWINA MONTAÑEZ	Brgy. Maduya, Carmona
DASMARIÑAS			
STA. LUCIA FLEA MKT.	7	EUGENIO NEGRIDO	DBB 1, Dasma, Cavite
STA. LUCIA FLEA MKT.	8	MARTI SAPIDA	DBB 1, Dasma, Cavite
CENTRAL MKT.	9	JOSELITA EVANGELISTA	Dasmariñas, Cavite
PALIPARAN V TALIPAPA	10	JOSIE SIM	Paliparan V, Dasma, Cavite
DBB PUB. MKT	11	CORAZON MIÑON	DBB, Dasma, Cavite
DBB PUB. MKT.	12	SANCHO REYES	DBB,Dasma, Cavite
AREA 3 SAN JUAN TAL.	13	VICTOR ORTEGA	Area 3, San Juan Dasma.
AREA 3 SAN JUAN TAL.	14	JOSEPHINE IBIAS	Area 3, San Juan Dasma.
SAN ANTONIO DE PADUA TAL.	15	SALVACION SARMIENTO	S. Antonio De Padua Dasma
BAUCAM MARKET	16	LUCIA PANES	Paliparan III, Dasma, Cavite
BGY. LUZVIMINDA I TAL.	17	BAVENCIO ARNOCO	Brgy. Luzviminda I, Dasma.
PALIPARAN WET & DRY MKT.	18	ALBERT ZARA	Molino Rd., Paliparan, Dasma.
GEN TRIAS			
GEN. TRIAS PUB. MKT.	19	LEVINIA DELA CRUZ	Gen. Trias, Cavite
GEN. MARIANO ALVAREZ			
GMA CENTRAL MKT.	20	IMELDA INFANTE	GMA, Cavite
GMA CENTRAL MKT.	21	ILUMINADA ESCOLANO	GMA, Cavite
METRO SAN JOSE PUB. MKT.	22	JOHANNA CADION	N. Virata San Jose, GMA
GRANADOS TALIPAPA	23	APIFANIO CADION	Brgy. Granados, GMA
IMUS			
IMUS PUB. MKT.	24	MAXIMO EVANGELIO	Imus, Cavite
TANZA			
TANZA PUB. MKT.	25	NESTOR JAVIER	Tanza, Cavite
TRECE MARTIREZ CITY			
T.M.C. PUB. MKT.	26	PABLITO LONTOC	Trece Martirez City, Cavite
ALFONSO			
LUKSUHIN PUB. MKT.	27	SOFRANIO DUMAEL	Luksuhin, Alfonso, Cavite
AMADEO			
AMADEO PUB. MKT.	28	LETICIA BAYBAY	Amadeo, Cavite
INDANG			
INDANG PUB. MKT.	29	BAYANI ERMENO	Indang, Cavite
MARAGONDON			
MARAGONDON PUB. MKT.	30	EDNA EUSEBIO	Maragondon, Cavite
MENDEZ			
MENDEZ PUB. MKT.	31	REXY FRANCISCO	Mendez, Cavite
NAIC			
NAIC PUB. MKT.	32	ROLANDO MAGBITANG	Naic, Cavite
SILANG			
SILANG PUB. MKT.	33	ADELAIDA SERRANO	Silang, Cavite
BULIHAN PUB. MKT.	34	REDIMER GATUS	Bulihan, Silang, Cavite
TAGAYTAY CITY			
TAGAYTAY CITY MKT.	35	ROBERTO DE LEON	Tagaytay City, Cavite
MOHOGANY MKT.	36	NOEL CAUSAREN	Tagaytay City, Cavite
TERNATE			
TERNATE PUB. MKT.	37	ANTONIO VALLESFIN	Ternate, Cavite
NOTE: Allocation was based on 20,000 bags target for April 2005.			
MAKATI			
TEJEROS MARKET	1	LUCENA BACALSO	Stall#3-4 Tejeros Market, Makati City
GUADALUPE COMM'L. COMPLEX	2	DANILO GARCIA	Stall#15 Guadalupe Comm'l Complex
	3	DANILO GARCIA	S-6 Pasillo 3, Guadalupe Comm'l Center
PIO DEL PILAR MARKET	4	ZOSIMO PEREZ	Stall#83 Pasillo C. Pio del Pilar Market
BANGKAL MARKET	5	ADELIA SILVA	Gen. Luna St., Bangkal Makati City
COMEMBO MARKET	6	AILEEN RAMOS	Comembo Market, Makati City

NAME OF MARKET		NAME OF OPERATOR	ADDRESS/LOCATION
LAS PIÑAS			
CAA MARKET	7	ROGELIO CAJAYON	115 Talipapa Phae 2, CAA (Store#1)
	8	LIBERATO TUSCANO	CAA Talipapa, Las Piñas City
ZAPOTE PUB. MARKET	9	MA. FEDELIZ GELDART	Unit 9&10, Lot 3, Casimiro Town Homes
LAS PIÑAS PUB. MARKET	10	LORETO SISON	Las Piñas Public Market
DANIEL FAJARDO MKT.	11	GERALD SISON	Daniel Fajardo Mkt. Las Piñas
ZAPOTE COMM'L PLAZA	12	SENEN SISON	Zapote Comm'l Plaza, Las Piñas
SAN ISIDRO FLEA MKT.	13	LEONCIA UNTALAN	San Isidro Flea Market, Las Piñas
LOZADA MARKET	14	ARNULFO UNGRIANO	Lozada Market, Las Piñas
BERNABE COMP. TALIPAPA	15	NEMESIO CALAHATI	Bernabe Comp. Talipapa, Las Piñas
TAGUIG			
SIGNAL VILLAGE MARKET	16	LETICIA TAPIA	34D Rodriguez St., Z-5 Signal Vill.
	17	LETICIA TAPIA	34A-1 rodriguez St., Z-5 Signal Vill.
TAGUIG MARKET	18	WILLIAM FRANCIS SULIT	3 Pamilihang Bayan ng Taguig
STA. ANA MARKET	19	MARISSA CRUZ	Liwayway st., Sta. Ana Market
	20	RESTIE HERNANDEZ	Liwayway St., Sta. Ana Market
	21	ROGELIO HERNANDEZ	Stall #13 Sta. Ana Market Taguig (branch)
B.S.N. MARKET	22	ELOISA FORTES	BSN Extn. Maharlika Comp.
FTI PRODUCERS MKT.	23	ALFONSO MUPAS	FTI Producers Mkt
PASAY			
MALIBAY MARKET	24	LOLITA AYAP	Malibay Market, Pasay City
MARICABAN MARKET	25	MARY ANN DIMAILIG	Maricaban Talipapa
	26	MANUEL DIMAILIG	Maricaban Talipapa
	27	MANUEL DIMAILIG	Bgy. 185 Maricaban Market
PASAY PUB. MARKET	28	ALLAN UÑAS	Stall#44 Pasay Public Market
CARTIMAR MARKET	29	ISABELO OBISPO	Cartimar Market, Libertad
BALAGBAG MARKET	30	ANGELA KHONGHUN	Balagbag Wet & Dry Market
PILDERA I, TALIPAPA	31	JOVELYN HONRUBIA	0270 Pildera I Talipapa
PILDERA II, TALIPAPA	32	JAENA MANUNTAG	Pildera II, Talipapa, Pasay City
PARAÑAQUE			
BICUTAN MARKET	33	MILINDA LEVITA	Stall #29-30 Bicutan Market, Upper-Blc
	34	JESUSA MAGPANTAY	Bicutan Market, Parañaque City
	35	MAXIMINA MENDOZA	Stall #14 &15, Bicutan Market
FLORES MARKET	36	MARITES CAIGA	2 P-A Flores Market
	37	PILITA EBREO	P-4 B, Flores Market
LA HUERTA PUBLIC	38	OSWALDO ESPINA	8773 P. Dandan St., La Huerta
	39	MEYNARD GUERRERA	(Main) P. Dandan St., La Huerta
	40	WILLIAM UNTALAN	5182 P. Dandan St., La Huerta
BERVILL MARKET	41	GUALBERTO ALSO	Store #2 Bervill Market
SUCAT SQUARE MKT.	42	MICHAEL HORNILLA	Square Market, Sucat Road
F.C. SANTOS MARKET	43	EMETERIA INFANTE	FC Santos Market
	44	TERESITA ORONA	FC Santos Market
ALING CLARA'S MARKET	45	AGAPITO CASALLA	1936 E. Rodriguez St., Baclaran
	46	ORLANDO MANUNTAG	Aling Clara's Market, Baclaran
MABUHAY MARKET	47	LUZVIMINDA JOSON	Mabuhay St., Baclaran
SAN ANTONIO VALLEY MKT.	48	GUALBERTO ALSO	San Antonio Market
	49	RODLOFO CAGUITLA	D.O. 7 san Antonio Market
	50	ALEXANDER HERNDEZ	D.O. 19 San Antonio Market
MANDALUYONG			
KALENTONG MARKET	51	ALEXANDER MATALA	Stall#17 Kalentong Market
MANDALUYONG PUB. MARKET	52	LOURDES LUGARES	Stall#100 Mandaluyong Pub Market (Branch)
SIERRA MADRE MARKET	53	SILVINO PAMIS	Siera Madre Market
MARTINEZ MARKET	54	MERIAM ANGHALA	Martinez Market Mandaluyong City
SAN JOAQUIN MARKET	55	RICHARD ATOG	San Juaqin Market
EDSA CENTRAL MARKET	56	MICHELLE DELA CRUZ	Edsa Crossing, Mandaluyong
MUNTINLUPA			
ALABANG MARKET	57	ANTONIO RAMOS	Stall# 7-8 Alabang Market (Store #2)
	58	PRICILLA RILLORAZA	18-B/020 Alabang Market (Store #2)
SOUTHGOLD MARKET	59	RUEL CASABUENA	Southgold Market Muntinlupa
	60	EDGARDO LLAMERA	Stall #31 Southgold Market
	61	ANTONIO SILVA	Southgold Market (Store #2)
CARE MARKET	62	GLENN FELLIZAR	Care Market Muntinlupa
SOUTH EMPIRE MKT.	63	GEMMA RAMOS	South Empire, Bayanan
TUNASAN MARKET	64	THERESA DELOS SANTOS	Tunasan Talipapa
	65	GERALD SILVA	Tunasan Market
SUCAT MARKET	66	PRIMO BILASON	Sucat Talipapa, Cupang
PATEROS			
HEXAGON MARKET	67	ROSARIO LUCAS	Hexagon Market
ANTIPOLO			
ANTIPOLO PUB. MKT.	1	ANTIPOLO CEREALS BUS. ASS. INC.	Stall 29 Antipolo Pub. Mkt.
	2	ANTIPOLO CEREALS BUS. ASS. INC.	Stall 64 Antipolo Pub. Mkt.
	3	ANTIPOLO CEREALS BUS. ASS. INC.	Antipolo Pub. Mkt. San Roque
	4	SHERLEY FLORESCA	Antipolo Public Market San Roque
LOREMAE SHOPPING CTR	5	DARWIN LIM VILLACARLOS	Antipolo Public Market San Roque
COGEO PUB. MKT.	6	GRACIANO REYES	Cogio Gate II Mkt., Marcos Highway
	7	PERFECTO VILLALUZ	Cogio Gate II Mkt., Marcos Highway
PAGRAI TALIPAPA	8	CHRISTOPHER CATLI	102 Pagrai Talipapa, Bgy. Mayamot
MASINAG MARKET	9	MASINAG RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Stall RI Masinag Mkt.
CUPANG TALIPAPA	10	CUPANG RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Prk. I Zone B. Bayaga Cupang Talipapa
	11	DANILO ARGAWANON	Cupang Talipapa, Antipolo City
PADILLA TALIPAPA	12	LUZ PLUMA	S-01 Bagong Nayon 2 Padilla Talipapa
LORES COUNTRY MKT.	13	RODEL PEREZ	Lores Country Mkt. Antipolo City
CMVC MARKET	14	TERESITA FRANCISCO	Stall 193-195 CMVC Mkt. Cogeo
NERI MARKET	15	EDITA GERONIMO	Neri Mart Unirock, Cogeo
MAMBUNGAN TALIPAPA	16	ROY CARINGAL	Mambungan Talipapa Sitio Kamias
ANGONO			
ANTIPOLO PUB. MKT.	17	ANGONO RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Angono Pub. Mkt. Guido St., Angono Rizal
BARAS			
BARAS PUB. MKT.	18	BARAS RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Baras Public Mkt., Katwiran St., Baras
BINANGONAN			
BINANGONAN PUB. MKT.	19	BINAGONAN RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Binagonan Pub. Mkt. Binagonan Rizal
PRITIL TALIPAPA	20	PRITIL TALIPAPA RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Pritil Talipapa, Libid Binagonan
TALIM ISLAND	21	TALIM RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Bgy. Janosa Talim Island, Binagonan
PANTOK TALIPAPA	22	ARLENE CERDA	Pantok Talipapa, Along National Rd.
CAINTA			
CAINTA PUB. MKT.	23	VICENTA CRUZ	Stall 31/32 Cainta Pub. Mkt., Sto. Domingo
KARANGALAN MKT.	24	BUENAS MULTI-PURPOSE COOP.	Karangalan Wet & Dry Mkt.
BUENAS MKT.	25	ARNALDO MERCADO	Buenas Mkt. Felix Ave., Karangalan Village
NEW CUBAO MKT.	26	JONATHAN BALAQUIAO	New Cubao Central Mkt.
ESTRELLA TALIPAPA	27	RUEL GUPIT	282 Estrella Talipapa, Cainta Rizal
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CARDONA PUB. MKT.	29	JOYCELYN CAMPO	Huntera Sc. Cardona Pub. Mkt.
JALA-JALA			
JALA-JALA PUB. MKT.	30	JALA-JALA RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Jala-Jala Pub. Mkt.
MARIKINA			
MARIKINA PUB. MKT.	31	MARIKINA RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Marikina Pub. Mkt.
	32	LORENZO ROSARIO	E. Jacinto St., Marikina Pub. Mkt.
CONCEPCION MKT.	33	ELSA LOZANO	D-28 Concepcion Mkt. Bayanbayanan
FAIRLANE MKT.	34	FAIRLANE RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Fairlane-Greenheight Mkt. Along J.P. Rizal
TUMANA MKT.	35	TUMANA RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Blk. 17 Ampalaya St., Tumana
PEOPLES MKT.	36	REBECCA LUMONTAD	B-72 Ampalaya Sc., Tumana
MOLAVE MKT.	37	ELIZABETH LOZANO	Stall 17 & 26 Molave Mkt.
MORONG			
MORONG PUB. MKT.	38	CRISTINA DE LEON	Stall 13 Morong Pub. Mkt., San Pedro
MONTALBAN			
MONTALBAN PUB. MKT.	39	RODRIGUEZ RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Stall 28 AX Montalban Pub. Mkt.
KASIGLAHAN MKT.	40	MA. LUISA DAGON	Kasiglahan Village Community Mkt.
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SAN MATEO PUB. MKT.	42	ERLINDA MENDOZA	Stall 28 San Mateo Pub. Mkt., San Mateo
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PILILLA PUB. MKT.	48	PILILLA RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Pilllla Pub. Mkt., Bagumbayan
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TANAY PUB. MKT.	49	TANAY RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Stall 197 & 198 Tanay Pub. Mkt.
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TAYTAY			
TAYTAY PUB. MKT. (new)	51	TAYTAY RICE RETAILERS ASSN.	Blk. Stall 44 Bldg. 3 New Tayatay Pub. Mkt.
TAYTAY MKT. (old)	52	BRUCCIO BIANZON	Taytay Old Pub. Mkt.
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TERESA PUB. MKT.	53	PONCIANO DE LEON, JR.	Feeds & Rice Section Pub. Mkt.

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(PDI- JULY 24, 2006)

"I am the way, the truth and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through Me."
John 14:6

Atty. Eugenia Marfori-Celi

November 15, 1920 – July 20, 2006

Peacefully joined our Lord
and her beloved husband **Alfredo M. Celi**.

Her bereaved daughter **Ma. Estela** and family
Joe (†) & **Flora Lansang**
Cipriano (†) & **Marian de Leon**
Gaudencio (†) & **Lilia Hermosisima**
Samuel (†) & **Nene Celi**
Isagani & **Ester Jose**
request the pious reader to pray for the repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence at
Ruby Street, Marfori Heights, Davao City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, July 26, 2006
at San Pedro Memorial Park, Davao City after a Mass
at 8:00 am at the Assumption Church Torres.

DEATH NOTICE

CRESIPORO C. ASTRERO

Peacefully joined our Creator
on July 13, 2006.

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On the Eighth Death Anniversary
of our beloved

BENILDO GOZAR HERNANDEZ

who passed away on July 24, 1998, the family requests relatives and friends to remember him in prayer.

Masses will be offered today for the eternal repose of his soul at the following churches:

St. Ignatius Village Chapel	6:30 p.m.
Christ the King Parish, Greenmeadows	6:00 a.m.
St. Joseph Parish Church, Bongabon, Oriental Mindoro	6:30 a.m.
St. Ignatius Cathedral, Camp Aguinaldo, Murphy	12:15 p.m.
Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park	6:00 p.m.
Sacred Heart Chapel, Camp Atienza, Libis	6:00 p.m.
Don Bosco, Pasay Road	12:00 p.m.
Asian Institute of Management, Paseo de Roxas, Makati	12:30 p.m.

In Loving Memory
Twenty Sixth Death Anniversary
of

RECIO M. GARCIA

who passed away on July 24, 1980

Holy Masses will be offered at the following Churches today:

Christ the King **Divine Word Mission Seminary** 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Blvd., Quezon City	–	7:30 a.m.
Christ the King Bgy. Veteran's Village, Proj. 7, Q.C.	–	7:15 a.m.
Immaculate Conception Cathedral Parish 39 Lantana Street, Cubao, Quezon City	–	6:00 a.m.
Mount Carmel Shrine Doña Juana Rodriguez Avenue New Manila, Quezon City	–	7:00 a.m.
National Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes Kanlaon cor. Retiro Street, Quezon City	–	7:30 a.m.
Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene **Parish of St. John the Baptist** 910 Plaza Miranda, Quiapo, Manila	–	6:00 a.m.
Our Lady of Loreto J. Figueras St., Sampaloc, Manila	–	6:00 a.m.
Sacred Heart Parish 28 Scout Ybardolaza St., Kamuning, Q.C.	–	7:30 a.m.
Santuario De San Pedro Bautista **San Pedro Bautista Parish** 1104 San Francisco Del Monte, Q.C.	–	6:30 a.m.
Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace **(Our Lady of EDSA)** EDSA corner Ortigas Avenue, Q.C.	–	6:30 a.m.
Sta. Cruz Parish **Blessed Sacrament Fathers & Brothers** 1099 Sta. Cruz, Manila	–	8:00 a.m.
Sta. Maria della Strada Katipunan Road, Quezon City	–	6:00 a.m.
St. Anthony's Shrine 254 Manrique Street, Sampaloc, Manila	–	6:15 a.m.
St. Paul the Apostle Parish #3 Timog Ave., cor. Mother Ignacia St. Brgy. Laging Handa, Quezon City	–	7:30 a.m.
Sta. Teresita Del Niño Jesus 43 Kanlaon St., Sta. Mesa, Quezon City	–	7:00 a.m.
Minor Basilica and National Shrine of **San Lorenzo Ruiz (Our Lady of the Most** **Holy Rosary)** Plaza Lorenzo, Binondo, Manila	–	7:00 a.m.

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For information leading to the RECOVERY of my children.

A Petition for Habeas Corpus is now pending at the Regional Trial Court, Branch 19, Cagayan de Oro City, for the following children:

Hannah Rose Alpers
6 years old (DOB: 08/16/1999)

Joshua Stewart Alpers
3 years old (DOB: 09/26/2002)

Sarah Susan Alpers
9 years old (DOB: 11/17/1996)

Alias last names used may be **MADELO** or **CUBERO**.

Contact #s **(088) 857-1864** or **0921-326-7434**.

(PDI – July 23, 24, 26 & 29, 2006)

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List of priority infra projects readied

For presentation to prospective foreign lenders

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY WILL SUBMIT A LIST OF MAjor infrastructure projects to foreign lenders for funding, as the government moves to fulfill its goal of pump priming the economy despite its failure to get the proposed 2006 national budget approved by Congress.

To be included in the list are vital telecommunication, transportation and public works projects.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the economic team was preparing the list of projects for presentation to various bilateral and multilateral agencies, including the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

Teves said the list would include construction of highways and bridges; the establishment of new airports and repair of existing facilities, and key irrigation projects. He added that the number of projects would be limited to only about 10, but that these would be big-ticket ventures that would significantly help achieve the government's pump-priming goals.

Teves said the economic team would tap the assistance of local government units and line agencies in the implementation of the projects. He added that government financial institutions would be asked to help generate counterpart funds by seeking partners from the private sector.

"I am hoping that on a monthly or quarterly basis, we (government) will be able to update the participants (lenders) and the general public on how we are advancing in completing the projects," Teves said during a recent forum attended by financial market investors.

The finance chief said that in the recent Philippine Development Forum (PDF), foreign lenders had committed to provide financial support for the Philippine government's economic development agenda. The economic team, he said, would take advantage of the offer by seeking funding for the key infrastructure projects to be identified.

He said that to achieve the goal of pump-priming the economy, infrastructure spending by the government should increase to a range of 5 to 7 percent of the gross domestic product, similar to the average spending by governments of neighboring countries. Currently, the Philippine government's infrastructure spending is equivalent to only about 2 to 3 percent of the GDP.

Boosting infrastructure spending was a key to achieving an ideal GDP growth rate of 7 to 9 percent. He said the current GDP growth, which is in the 5-percent level, was not enough to ensure that the benefits of economic expansion would reach the poor.

The government's economic team agreed on asking foreign lenders to assist in the pump-priming program following the failure of Congress to pass the proposed P1.053-trillion national budget for 2006.

The government is now running under a reenacted 2005 budget, which is set at only about P918 billion.

The failure to pass the proposed budget for this year was a result of a deadlock between the Lower House and the Senate. While the Lower House wanted the proposed amount of budget intact, the Senate wanted it cut.

One Voice: Who needs Cha-cha?

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

ONE VOICE SAYS WE DON'T NEED Cha-cha. What we need are real reforms. I agree.

Cha-cha means changing our form of government from a bicameral presidential to a unicameral parliamentary system. This would be like canceling a life insurance policy that you have been paying premiums on for 70 years and exchanging it for a brand-new policy. An insurance agent or broker who persuades you to make this switch is guilty of the unethical practice called twisting. It is unethical because you will irretrievably lose some valuable benefits you have built up for years.

Also, One Voice says the unicameral parliamentary system dumps more power on politicians who already have too much power. Again, I agree.

Thomas Jefferson and the American Founding Fathers invented the presidential system with two houses of lawmakers and a powerful executive department in order to break the tremendous powers of the British-style parliament. Our American colonizers installed the presidential system in the Philippines when the Spaniards ceded us to America.

To cover this grab for more power for themselves, the politicians who have been pushing for a unicameral parliament have been insisting that our presidential system is the very reason for the sorry state of our economy. A parliamentary system will solve all our economic ills, hurrah.

This is the parliamentarians' *non sequitur*: Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand are ran under parliamentary systems and are more prosperous than the Philippines. Ergo, if we adopt the parliamentary system, we will be as prosperous as they are.

In spite of the economic data being waved around, I don't think we are far behind, if we are behind at all. Besides, I don't envy Singapore where the opposition holds two lonely and beleaguered seats out of the total of 84. In Malaysia, the deputy prime minister is on trial for his life for earning the ire of the Prime Minister. Thailand just went through some cataclysmic experience that sent the Prime Minister packing (who has since bounced back).

Our parliamentarians should go beyond their noses. There are dozens of countries, particularly in Africa, which are run under the parliamentary system, but are much poorer than the Philippines.

As One Voice says, why don't we just go ahead and solve our economic problems?

Let's take rice. We continue to import shiploads of rice every year. We import rice at a high price, and sell it to the Filipino consumer at a huge loss. Who bears the loss? The Filipino taxpayer. And, the Thai farmer, not the Filipino farmer, gets the incentive to plant more rice.

I have a friend who can triple rice production in his farm if the government leaves him alone. But he is faced with all sorts of problems, including competition from the Philippine government that sells foreign rice at a huge loss. Do we have to make the parliament shift to solve this iniquity?

To keep our plywood factories humming, we import Philippine mahogany from Indonesia. We have denuded our forests of this important resource, and our reforestation program has failed. Do we need to shift to a parliamentary system to solve this problem?

Our soft drinks industry import cheap sugar from Thailand where the mills are the latest models while ours are antiques. Do we need to shift to parliamentary system to modernize our sugar mills?

In his infinite wisdom, God planted abaca only in the Philippines. But the world market for abaca fiber has shrunk because of competition from synthetic fibers. Now, industrial uses for the abaca fiber are growing. Do we need to shift to a parliamentary system to develop more abaca plantations around the country?

I agree with One Voice. We don't need the Cha-cha. All we need is just to go ahead and solve our economic problems.

Lending to SMEs increasing

By Christine A. Gaylican

LENDING TO SMALL AND MEDIUM-sized industries was brisk in the first semester, with Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corp. approving some P1.9 billion in loans.

This was 27 percent higher than year-ago level.

SB Corp. president and COO Benel P. Lagua attributed the improvement to the increase in the number of companies that invested in new and expanding food and retail ventures.

Loans extended by SB Corp.'s wholesale lending unit went up 18 percent to P1.3 billion from P1.1 billion last year.

Lagua noted that several local banks had participated in SB Corp.'s lending and guarantee operation. These included Asiatrust Bank, Export and Industry Bank, Bank of Commerce, Equitable-PCI Banking Corp. and Planters Development Bank.

Loans extended under SB Corp.'s microfinance program to lending conduits in this field rose 154 percent to P155.8 million from P62 million in the first half of 2005.

"The features of our various credit programs have improved over the years. Our marketing efforts have also been strengthened by our recent ODA (Official Development Assistance) loans," according to SB Corp. CEO Zorayda Amelia Alonzo.

Considered the backbone of the Philippine economy, the SME sector represents 99.6 percent of all registered firms nationwide. It employs 69.9 percent of the country's labor force and contributes 32 percent to the economy, in terms of gross domestic product.

LAMITAN MAYOR Roderick Furigay (right) hands the ceremonial key of the municipality to Datu Haron Bandila (center), chair of the ARMM Business Council (ABC), during the 5th ARMM Business Congress held in Lamitan, Basilan. With them is Jann Jakilan, president of the Autonomous Basilan Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry and ARMM labor secretary. More than 400 business leaders, policy makers, government executives and prospective investors attended the two-day conference, which promoted Basilan as a viable business and tourism destination.

Makro seeks bigger share of retail market

By Daxim L. Lucas

WHOLESALER PILIPINAS MAKRO INC. expects the rest of the current year to remain a "challenging period" for the consumer goods market, especially in the nonfood sector.

To offset this, an official of Makro said efforts were being exerted to boost sales through innovative pricing, including the sale of products in smaller packages.

In a recent interview, Makro director Juanito J. Villegas said the strategy was aimed at capturing a larger share not only of the firm's traditional markets, such as hotels and large restaurant chains, but also of smaller businesses such as *sari-sari* stores.

"We now have smaller packages that are more affordable to our smaller clients," he said.

Villegas said the challenge for consumer goods wholesalers like Makro was how to increase sales of their nonfood inventories, given the tepid local economy.

"People are more focused on the basics nowadays," he said.

To date, Makro has over 700,000 registered members at its 14 outlets nationwide. Of these, about 400,000 are active clients. It will add another outlet in Mandaluyong City next month.

Villegas said he would also like to see an improvement in sales volumes in the company's food business, which is its bread-and-butter operation.

"On the food side, we have almost flat growth for this year, which is actually better than the rest of the industry," he said, noting that sales continue to reel from the effects of the Reformed Value-Added Tax levy which the government imposed early this year to help stem a fiscal crisis.

"The effect of that is that many sari-sari stores folded up," he said, many of which are long-time Makro clients.

Despite this, the Makro official said the company retained its commanding lead in the local consumer good wholesale market, with its mail rival, Puregold of controversial businessman Lucio Co, ranking far second. He said Makro was also the market leader in the fresh food segment.

STRONG ECONOMIC FUNDAMENTALS

BSP sees GIR rising to $30B in 5 years

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas said the country's gross international reserves (GIR) could reach $30 billion in five years.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters that a GIR of between $25 billion and $30 billion within five years, or before his term ends in 2011, was attainable provided the economy would maintain its current, relatively healthy fundamentals.

GIR is the amount of a country's reserved foreign exchange holdings, which indicates a country's ability to finance transactions with the rest of the world, including importation. It also reflects the country's ability to protect its local currency from the adverse impact of external developments.

The BSP earlier said the country's GIR reached a new high of $21.147 billion as of end-June.

"We could achieve this (as much as $30 billion in GIR) if we could maintain the trajectory of our economic fundamentals, such as increasing foreign exchange remittances and higher economic growth," Tetangco said.

Barring any untoward development, he said remittances from overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) were expected to continue increasing considering the steady rise in the number of workers deployed.

Data from the BSP showed that OFW remittances in the first six months of the year stood at $4.9 billion, higher by 14.8 percent than year-ago level.

The BSP had said the growth in OFW remittances was due not only to the rising number of Filipino workers deployed overseas but also to the improving quality of jobs available to them.

Remittances from OFWs were among the factors that keep the economy afloat despite the government's fiscal woes. Personal consumption, growth of which was partly due to increases in remittances sent, was said to be countering the dampening impact on the economy of restrained government spending.

Tetangco said the attainment of the government's economic growth targets would also naturally result in an increase in the GIR.

The government's economic managers want the country to post a GDP growth of between 7 and 9 percent yearly in the medium term.

They are currently pushing for the liberalization of the economic provisions of the Constitution to allow the entry of more foreign investments, and help achieve the medium-term growth targets.

For this is year, the government has set its GDP growth target at between 5.5 and 6.2 percent. Economic officials said the target was attainable given the country's growing exports and rising farm output. *Michelle V. Remo*

EasyCall selling more assets to raise funds

By Riza T. Olchondra

EASYCALL COMMUNICATIONS Philippines Inc. is selling three more pieces of property and another condominium unit to raise additional funds to partly finance its remaining operations and settle debts.

ECPI, which used to be the country's top paging company, raised P28.98 million in 2005 from the sale of its Galleria condominium units. After partly paying creditors, the company retained P14.9 million in the first semester of 2006.

The company registered a loss of P31 million in 2004.

Company president Soc Niro said ECPI hoped to strengthen its finances by selling another condominium unit and three subdivision lots that used to host the transmitters for its paging system. The company had closed its paging unit in 2003.

One of the lots is located in Novaliches, at Brgy. Sta. Monica's Santiago Subdivision. It is a 186-square meter property valued at P930,000. The two others are the 750-sq. m. property in Stateland Hills Subd. in Manggahan, Gen. Trias, Cavite worth P1.22 million and a 216-square meter land in Tagaytay worth P972,000. It will also sell a 37-square meter unit in Binondo's State Centre Condominium worth P1.186 million.

ECPI stands to gain an extraordinary income of at least P4.2 million from the sale of these assets.

The funds to be raised will be invested in the company's Easycall e-Services Inc. and telecommunications ventures.

Taiwanese firm, BCDA cite Poro Point port

ONE OF THE BIGGEST TAIWANESE firms doing business in the Philippines has cited the private operators of Poro Point seaport in San Fernando City in La Union for its high standards in handling cargo.

Golden Strait International Enterprises Corp. commended the port "for the successful handling of our cargo to its destination."

The firm exports Philippine products from northern Luzon to Taiwan.

Golden Strait vice president Wenin Chu said Poro Point's bulk terminal "suits well our line of business not only because of proximity to our supply cargo but also because of existing structures and facility which are ideally provided."

The Poro Point seaport is managed by Poro Point Industrial Corp. (PPIC), a joint venture between Bulk Handlers Inc. and Poro Point Management Corp., a subsidiary of Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA).

BCDA earlier said the Poro Point bulk terminal was fast becoming an alternate port for shippers due to its low tariffs and efficiency.

BCDA said the efficiency of Poro Point services have resulted in savings for vessel owners and importers due to faster vessel turnaround time, lower manpower costs and reduced berthing fees.

BCDA added that the proximity of Poro Point to China, Indochina, Japan, Korea and Taiwan has made it an ideal seaport around which industrial and tourism facilities can be developed.

The Poro Point Terminal has also emerged as a major terminal for locators in nearby economic zones, including Clark and Subic.

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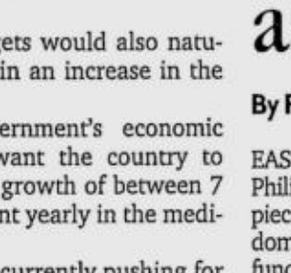
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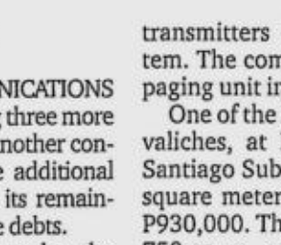
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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People, Events & Products

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Samsung consolidates position as leading total solutions provider

SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS SHOWCASED JULY 19 its latest range of premium IT products in the notebook, LCD monitor and printer categories, reinforcing the company's leadership position in developing cutting-edge technologies and solutions to meet the increasing demands of modern day businesses and executives on the move.

The Samsung IT business has seen an impressive double-digit growth of 15 percent in Southeast Asia and Oceania last year, driven by the establishment of its new corporate IT business, as well as its entry into the notebook segment and expansion of its color laser printers line. Locally, Samsung Philippines achieved sales of more than $20 million last year, an outstanding 30 percent increase over the previous year.

Leveraging on its expertise in digital convergence, innovation and technology in semiconductor and LCD panel as well as its established distribution channels, Samsung is setting its goal in being the major IT player in the region. Targeting to grow its IT business by over 35 percent in the Southeast Asia this year, Samsung seeks to increase its portfolio in its corporate B2B market segments.

"From our input computing, storage to output printing and display devices, Samsung has a broad range of product portfolio as compared to most IT brands. With our technology, innovation and leadership in each of the business disciplines, we are able to harness the best available technologies and offer our corporate customers a strong product line-up and a comprehensive suite of cost-efficient and effective solutions to drive total cost of ownership lower and help bring business to greater heights." said Spencer Shim, president and CEO Samsung Electronics Philippines at the Samsung IT Roadshow 2006.

Acknowledging that corporate end-users these days value design and greater convenience, and seek products with multiple functionalities that drive outstanding performance, the Samsung IT strategy is catered towards meeting their sophisticated needs. Samsung has a comprehensive selection of premium IT products, ranging from the ultra-thin power notebooks, the ergonomically designed network monitors to the world's smallest and lightest color laser printer. Delivering unparalleled performance for business computing, Samsung has won more than 40 global awards in 2005 alone with the sophisticated designs and revolutionary user-centric functions.

In this year's Samsung IT Roadshow, the company further reinforced its commitment in capturing the corporate business segment with its series of digital office management solutions that allow the users to work effectively and efficiently in a seamless and integrated network environment.

Leading the technological solutions at the event is Samsung's MagicNet technology. It enables users to schedule and push content directly to multiple MagicNet monitors on the network from a centralized server. This innovative technology eliminates the need for any remote PCs and is ideal for public displays at shopping malls and airports.

Another key solution is Samsung's Confidential Print. Documents sent to the printer will remain in the printer until a four-digit personal identification number (PIN) is entered. This allows you to maintain privacy and ensure secure delivery and printing of confidential information, thus protecting company's intellectual property and valuable business information.

Other solutions showcased in this roadshow include:

• USB Direct Print gives users the convenience to print documents directly from USB memory stick

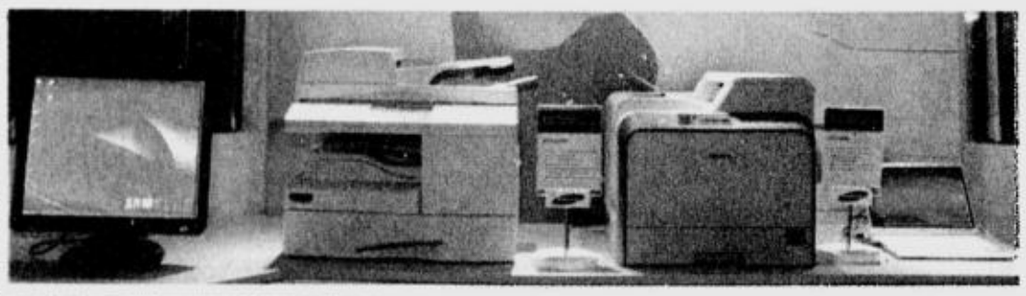
• SyncThru Network Management is a web-based printer fleet management application, allowing remote monitoring and printers network management

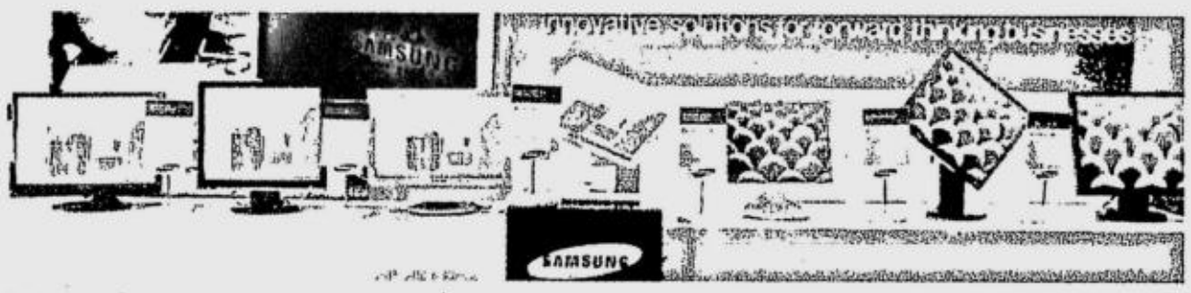
• SecuPrint document security solution enables administrator to track and control the printing activity of any document

• Document management, such as scan to e-mail and scan to network, offers the convenience of sending scanned documents direct from Samsung MFP printers, and storing directly to network folders

• Print Audit, a print tracking and auditing solution that monitors the usage of printers and thus allow businesses to manage their costs more effectively

SPENCER Shim, president and CEO of Samsung Electronics Philippines, Charles Choi, VP ICT, and Sangjin Park, president and CEO of Samsung Asia





Deadline for KBP Golden Dove Awards July 31

THE KAPISANAN NG MGA Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) announced that the deadline for submitting entries for the prestigious Golden Dove Awards is July 31.

The KBP Golden Dove Awards, now on its 15th year of recognizing exemplary achievements by individuals and stations in the field of broadcasting, is the only major award devoted exclusively to recognizing excellence in the broadcast industry. Through the years, the KBP Golden Dove Awards has helped promote higher standards of quality and professionalism in the broadcast media and encouraged the production of more socially relevant TV and radio programming.

'Local Board of Nominations'

The Golden Dove Awards' search for the best in broadcasting is not limited to Metro Manila only but is truly nationwide. This year, the KBP introduced an innovation that encourages audiences in the provincial areas to participate in identifying individuals, programs, and stations deserving of recognition. Manny Luzon, chair of the KBP Awards and Recognition Committee, said that for this year, the KBP, through its local chapters, has started organizing a "Local Board of Nominations" consisting of prominent citizens in local communities to nominate candidates for the awards in their areas.

The categories in this year's Golden Dove Awards fall under five categories: Individual achievement (KBP Lifetime Achievement Award and Ka Doroy Broadcaster of the Year), Best Station, Best Programs, Best Personalities, Best Public Service Announcements (PSAs), and Best Promotional Materials.

Copies of entry forms are now available from the KBP national office at the 6th floor, LTA Building, 118 Perea Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City. Winning entries shall be announced via the annual KBP Golden Dove Awards ceremony in October.

For other details about the 15th Golden Dove Awards, call the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas national office at 815-1990 to 92, 892-4129, fax 815-1989, e-mail at kbp@pacific.net.ph, or log on to www.kbp@pacific.org.ph.

Watsons mid-year sale

ONGOING UNTIL July 26, Watsons, Your Personal Store, offers a mid-year sale at all its outlets nationwide. Selected beauty products are discounted for up to 70 percent.

Get marked down prices for your favorite items such as Black and Beauty Shampoo, Saint Ives Apricot jar, Celeteque facial wash, Block and White facial scrub and Watsons Milk Yogurt Bath Mixed fruit. Soaps from Olay, Nubia, and CY Gabriel are also included in the sale. Hair care products like Avea, A Bonne and Citrus Shine are also available at more affordable rates. You can also have various choices of scents from Bambini, and Lewis and Pearl.

Aside from these great offers, the Watsons mid-year sale also has great electrical buys. For a minimum purchase of P300, you can avail yourself of a hair trimmer or a hairdryer for a much lower price. If you buy P300 worth of products, the hair trimmer is yours for only P199 or you can buy the hair dryer for only P269.

Watsons Your Personal Store is the largest health and beauty retailer in Asia with 158 outlets all over the Philippines, with the four most recent ones located at the newly opened SM Mall of Asia.

Travel Café Philippines opens in Tokyo July 25

THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURism and Japanese company Travel Café Co Ltd have announced that they will jointly open "Travel Café Philippines" in Tokyo on Tuesday, July 25.

Travel Café Co Ltd is a leader in the café business in Japan, operating a number of especially themed coffee shops all over the country. Travel Café Philippines, located in the busy Iidabashi Station in Tokyo, is the first to be dedicated to a single country destination, combining good food with the appeal of travel to an exotic destination like the Philippines.

Travel Café Philippines brings together the country's best talents to create a concept inspired by tradition with a contemporary twist.

Multi-awarded restaurateur Glenda Rosales-Barretto of Via Mare has developed the Filipino menu for the Travel Café Philippines, interpreted by trained Japanese chefs of Travel Café Co.

Japanese space planner Shien Co made use of the best furniture and indigenous Filipino materials developed by the Philippines' elite Movement 8 designers Budji Layug and Al Caronan as well as by furniture manufacturers/exporters Locsin International and Far Eastern Corp.

Impy Pilapil icon

The icon for Travel Café Philippines is a masterpiece sculpture of stone and glass created by Filipino sculptor Impy Pilapil.

Philippine coffee varieties Barako (Philippine Liberica) and Alamid (Philippine Civet) are featured in the menu, along with such Filipino favorites as the famous Halo-halo and Lumpiang Ubod or coconut seed rolled in egg wrapper and topped with special peanut sauce.

The café will operate as a café-style restaurant at daytime and as a bar at night.

The café will likewise serve as an information hub for the Philippines with a vast collection of travel references, as it envisions to provide an optimum environment for making travel plans to the Philippines.

At the café, visitors can browse through resource materials: from books to videos shown on plasma screens. A travel concierge will be available to personally assist guests, answer queries on the Philippines, and recommend travel itineraries.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and the Philippines. The Philippine Department of Tourism has embarked on an aggressive marketing campaign in Japan to attract tourists, particularly women who are enthusiastic travelers.

Through a culinary experience and a unique themed setting, Travel Café Philippines aims to provide the Japanese, especially the women, with an opportunity to become more familiar with the Philippines and consider the country as their next holiday destination.

Hyundai Santa Fe sets economy pace on diesel

THE NEW HYUNDAI SANTA FE IS PROVING to be a fuel economy champion among lifestyle 4-wheel-drive models.

In an independent fuel economy test conducted recently by New Zealand motoring journalist Donn Anderson, the new generation Santa Fe 2.2 CRDi diesel averaged 5.95 litres/100 km.

With this result, the Santa Fe is able to complete 1,256 kilometers on the 75-litre fuel tank, an outstanding result for a roomy, 4,650-mm long five-door sport utility vehicle weighing 1,823 kg.

'Real-life' conditions

The test was carried out in "real life" conditions that included town, city, rural roads and motorway driving.

Anderson, who is currently working in Britain, completed the test in southern England where he endeavored to match the driving conditions to those in New Zealand. "The result certainly dispels the argument that all 4-wheel-drives are thirsty and underlined the advances and excellent fuel economy of the latest diesel engines," he said.

The new Santa Fe CRDi is powered by an in-line, four-cylinder, single overhead camshaft 2.2-liter common rail diesel engine. It uses Hyundai's cutting-edge variable geometry turbocharger for smooth power delivery, strong fuel economy and fine all-round performance.

Hyundai focused on reducing friction wherever possible to raise engine efficiency and smoothness, achieving significant advances by including a new low-friction balancer shaft.

The 110 kW engine produces a massive 335 Nm of torque between 1,800 and 2,500 RPM. "Significantly, the engine is doing around 2,000 revs at 100 km/h in top gear," said Anderson. "Peak torque is achieved at this engine speed resulting in the Santa Fe running efficiently while being responsive and flexible at our open road speed limit."

The test result over an extended distance bettered the official European extra urban fuel test average of 6.0 liters/100 km, and the combined test average of 7.3 liters/100 km.

How women indulge in their passions and have fun with life

YOU JUST KNOW IT INSTANTLY WHEN YOU MEET A well-rounded person worth knowing and Jenny gives out that kind of aura instantly.

Jenny is a resource speaker for the Quezon City Rotary Club, a host for an early morning show, a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity and Make-A-Wish Foundation. She also dabbles in ballet, running and wall climbing. And oh, she has been to at least 15 countries and as of this writing, is in Australia, as a member of her Rotary International's Group Study Exchange Program.

We haven't even begun to discuss her current preoccupation as a regional product specialist for a respected publishing group, McGraw Hill's medical division, no less. Jenny's day-to-day tasks include marketing and promoting medical and trade books to bookstores, library suppliers and universities. She also handles manuscripts by local authors and pricing, as well as doing PR for her books.

JENNY G. Javier

Tough order, one would think, but Jenny has had enough practice, she has climbed the proverbial corporate ladder step by step. She was a training coordinator for a school, then branch sales trainer for Avon before she became the regional specialist she is now and co-host for the "People at Work" segment of Studio 23's "Breakfast".

What's her secret to fulfillment and success? Jenny lists three things: "Passion, love what you do. A cliché if there ever was one. Aim for high standards and always be ethical in all you do. Lastly is to grow continuously and stretch yourself." Jenny's triumphs started from small things. She left her family to go to college in Manila. She was scared then but she conquered her fear. Now, she's been to most parts of the world! Not bad for a former promdi, huh?

This fearless female's fun persona also comes from knowing that you have to be happy first, within yourself.

With so many accomplishments, how does a fun, fearless female stay grounded and sane? "I try not to bring work at home, I exercise religiously, keep a journal and talk to close friends whenever possible.", Jenny says. If there's to be a sense of consolation for the rest of us, it's that she does exercise to keep her trim figure even when she does make sure she has her share of the Whopper and Whopper Jr from Burger King every week.

Have It Your Way with the fire-grilled burgers from Burger King is available in 30 restaurant locations.

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Editor Leo Magno

Microsoft to arm OFWs with Internet phones

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

MICROSOFT WILL SOON ARM FILIPINO overseas workers with voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phones to make cheaper calls to their families in the Philippines.

VoIP is a technology that routes voice calls to IP networks or the Internet instead of through the traditional circuit-switched networks. This innovation allows people to make cheap or even free long distance calls anywhere in the world.

Seattle-based Randy Granovetter, who is general manager for business development for emerging markets in Microsoft, disclosed that the software company is in the initial stages of a project that will provide Windows-powered mobile phones to overseas Filipino workers.

"We are giving the Windows 5.0 Mobile Phone to the OFW who is leaving the Philippines on contracted assignment. In most countries there are WiFi (wireless fidelity)-enabled facilities where OFWs are working; such as in hospitals, hotels, engineering offices, cruise ships and i-cafés/hotspots," said Granovetter in an e-mail to Infotech.

Microsoft chose to pilot this project in the Philippines through its partnership with the Overseas Workers Welfare Association (Owwa). The government agency and Microsoft are also collaborating on other technology-related projects.

"We felt that the OFWs would have the most need for a service like this," added Granovetter.

While there are issues of lack of infrastructure and poor Internet connectivity in the Philippines, Microsoft believes this initiative will eventually drive down communications spending among Filipino foreign workers and their families.

"We are also working with partners in the Philippines to provide friends and family two ways to communicate at a low cost to the OFW. A family can call the OFW using LCS Communicator Interface and application on their computer at home or in an Internet café on a VoIP to Mobile VOIP," the executive added.

Filipino foreign workers will be required to sign up to use the special VoIP phone and the VoIP-enabled PC in Owwa.

After registration, the OFWs can make VoIP calls from "30 OFW global centers" of Owwa, the executive said.

The Microsoft executive revealed that this initiative will soon make OFW remittances a lot easier, as it will promote digital transfer of funds.

Granovetter said the OFWs will be issued a bank card, while the beneficiaries will be given debit cards through one of the authorized Owwa banks or remittance centers.

"After an OFW remits, he or she can check his balance on the phone or on the computer through a LCS communicator application. The OFW can transfer funds to the beneficiaries' debit cards," the executive said.

Owwa will be involved in the execution of this program.

Microsoft said the actual rollout of the project will be in the latter months of 2006.

"This project has been in process for six months and will continue in the trial for three months," the Microsoft executive added.

Microsoft said it will also work with carriers, banks, service providers, Microsoft independent software vendors on this project.

SOMETHING'S cookin' at the Jollibee website

Blog finds Jollibee site's 'tricks'

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

A BLOG SET UP TO PROMOTE A LOCAL competition on Internet marketing said some sections of the corporate website of fastfood chain Jollibee Food Corp. uses "black hat" tricks to increase its ranking in a Google search.

The Isulong SEO blog (http://www.isulongseoph.org) discovered some hidden text on the Jollibee webpage (http://www.jollibee.com.ph/jollibee-food-corporation.html).

Infotech called the Jollibee Food Corp. but officials were unavailable to comment.

According to Google's webmaster guidelines, using hidden text or hidden links are discouraged to increase search engine ranking of a certain website. Sites found to violate these guidelines are blocked from the search engine's search index.

Early this year, local e-commerce website myAyala.com was briefly banned from Google after it was found violating the hidden text rule. MyAyala.com subsequently took down the hidden text and Google took them out of the blacklist.

The blog also discovered Jollibee's website code laden with so-called meta tags or comment tags of repeating keywords. Meta tags provide information about a web document.

The developers of the Jollibee website created "doorway pages" or webpages meant to spam the index of a search engine, the blog added.

Early this year, Google blocked BMW.de Germany from its index for using doorway pages (http://blog.outer-court.com/archive/2006-02-04-n60.html).

BMW.de's website is back online after complying with Google's guidelines.

Yahoo! eyes bigger RP market share

By Erwin Oliva
INQ7.net

YAHOO! IS DOING EVERY POSSIBLE WAY TO get more Filipinos here and abroad to use their Philippine portal.

The Internet portal recently unveiled a new Philippine version (www.yahoo.com.ph) that hopes to offer a "snapshot" of all the content and services Filipinos need, officials told Infotech in an interview.

In a telephone interview, Larry Jordan, director of product development of Yahoo! Southeast Asia, said the Internet firm is now in negotiations with content providers in the Philippines. These negotiations hope to bring in more local content that would target local residents and Filipino foreign workers.

Jordan declined to identify the local content providers they are in discussions with.

Yahoo! Southeast Asia is also focused on bringing its communications services to millions of mobile phone subscribers. Currently, it offers several mobile services that allow people to access online messaging service Yahoo! Messenger on their mobile phones.

Jordan said Filipinos are among the top users of Yahoo! Messenger in Southeast Asia.

"Filipinos will actually set a time with their loved ones abroad to chat online," added the Yahoo! executive.

Jason Coates, communications manager for Yahoo! Southeast Asia, said the move to provide more local content and more communications service to Filipinos is "just the beginning."

Jordan, for one, said they would soon provide more basketball information on the Philippine portal because of the country's love for the game.

"We've seen an increase uptake of Yahoo! services in the Philippines," said Coates.

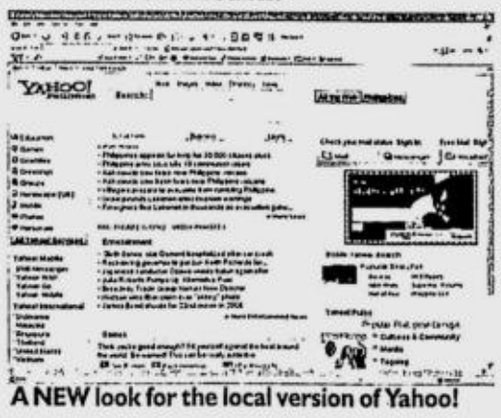
These developments are now pushing the Internet firm to "seriously consider" setting up operations in the Philippines, added Jordan.

Jordan said the Internet firm is recruiting people, including editors, to man an office in the Philippines.

Yahoo! unveiled its new portal design on May 2006, as it aimed to give visitors a "single view" of all its content and services.

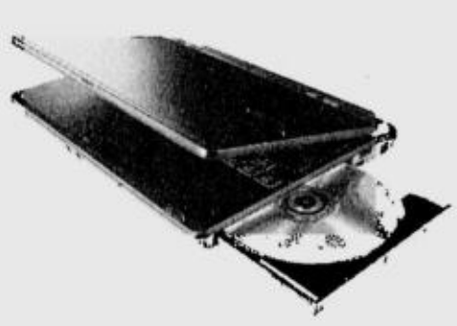
For the Philippine portal, Yahoo! Southeast Asia is currently focusing on bringing in more relevant content and service.

Meanwhile, Jordan said Yahoo! is currently at the early stages of Yahoo! Go TV, a version that allows television viewers to access the portal's services and content. This is now being tested in the United States.



A NEW look for the local version of Yahoo!

THE POSSIBILITIES ARE INFINITE FUJITSU



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BUSINESS

IC raises insurance companies' fees, charges

By Michelle V. Remo

THE INSURANCE COMMISSION has raised the fees and charges imposed on insurance companies, saying that the hike is necessary to sufficiently cover expenses incurred in the delivery of services and its exercise of regulatory functions.

The new schedule of fees and charges covering insurance companies, actuaries and reinsurance firms are contained in Insurance Memorandum Circular No. 3-2006.

Under the schedule, the issuance of a license to a newly established insurance firm is set at P50,000 while renewal is set at P20,000. Mutual benefit associations will be charged P25,000 for a new license and P15,000 for renewal.

Supervisory fees for insurance companies range from P45,000 to P95,000 depending on size of the company. Supervisory fees for mutual benefit associations range from P30,000 to P70,000. Insurance and reinsurance brokers are charged anywhere between P5,000 and P15,000 for supervisory fees.

Penalty for late filing of annual financial statement is set at P20,000 for an insurance company, P15,000 for a mutual benefit association, and P10,000 for a reinsurance or insurance broker. An additional fine of P5,000 will also be slapped for each day of delay.

Commissioner Evangeline Escobillo earlier said the imposition of higher fees was necessary because, with the old rates, the agency was forced to turn to the government for its operational expenses.

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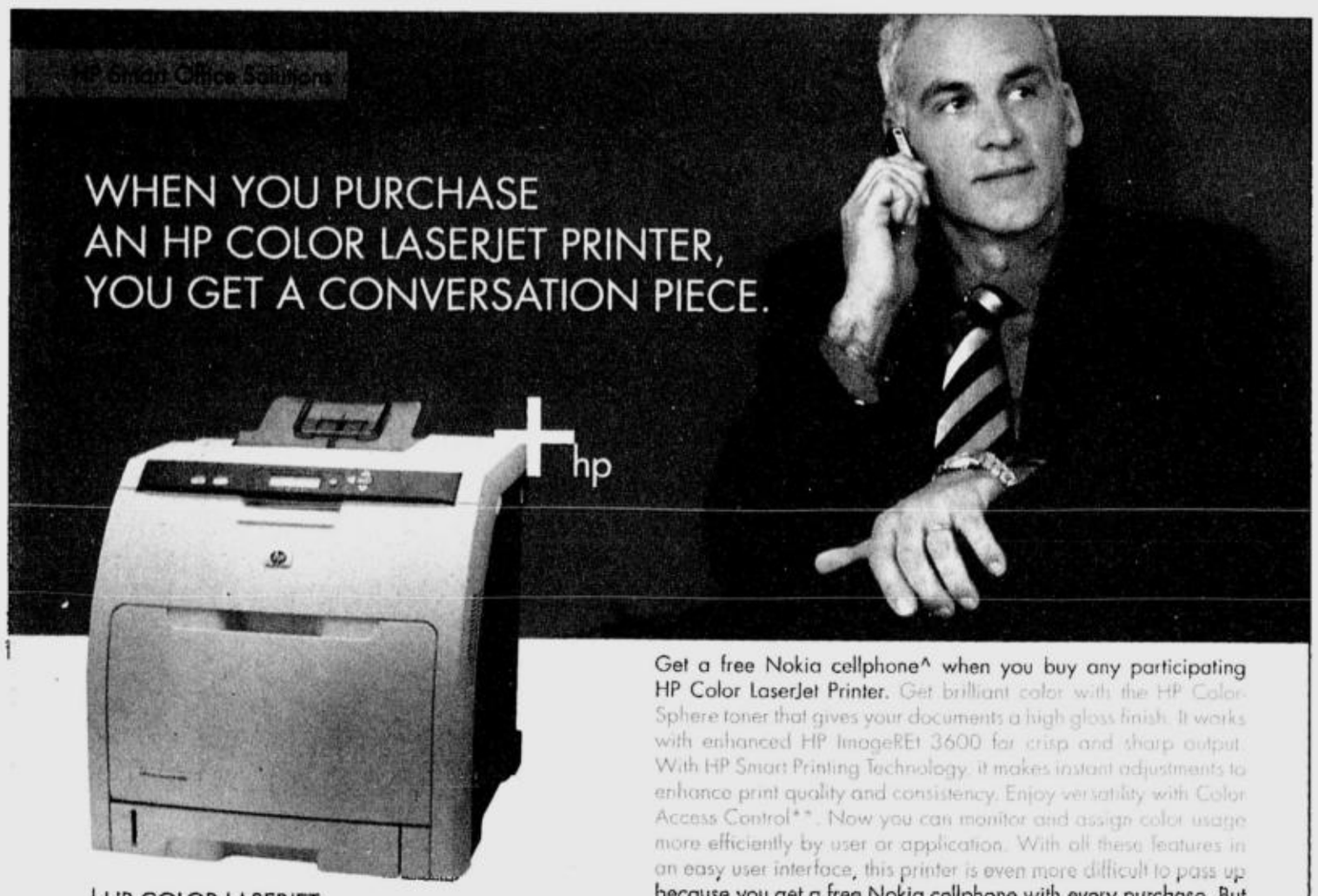

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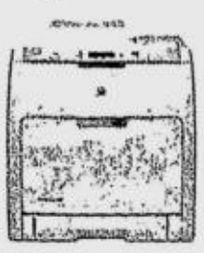

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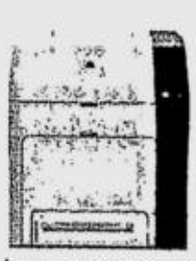

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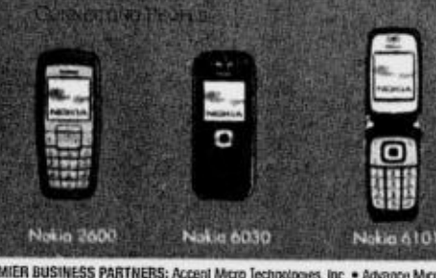

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RP–Taiwan trade up 3.4% from Jan–May

Export of Philippine goods to Taiwan reached $1.18B

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TWO-WAY TRADE BETWEEN THE Philippines and Taiwan has increased 3.38 percent in the first five months to about $2.96 billion, indicating that efforts to foster closer economic ties are paying off.

According to Taiwan's Government Information Office (GIO), the Philippines received some $1.77 billion in shipments of goods between January and May—an increase of 2.2 percent from about $1.73 billion in the same period in 2005.

At the same time, Philippine exports to Taiwan reached $1.18 billion—an improvement of 5.18 percent year on year.

Taiwan still enjoyed a trade surplus, posting some $590.1 million as of end-May. But this represented a reduction of 3.25 percent from last year's $606.9 million.

Also, GIO data showed that the Philippines was Taiwan's 12th largest trading partner during the period, accounting for 1.78 percent of its total global trade valued at $164.8 billion.

Among developing countries, the country is Taiwan's fourth largest trade partner after Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and Thailand.

The Philippines is the 11th largest destination of Taiwanese exports, with 2.1 percent of total outbound cargoes valued at about $83.9 billion.

Also, the country is the 15th largest source of Taiwan's imports, accounting for about 1.5 percent of total inbound shipments worth about $81 billion.

In December, Filipino officials and their Taiwanese counterparts held an economic forum that was highlighted with the signing of a memorandum of agreement to establish a growth corridor linking the Kaohsiung freeport area in southern Taiwan to the Subic and Clark special economic zones in northern Philippines.

In a previous interview, Manila Economic and Cultural Office resident representative Antonio I. Basilio explained that the corridor was intended to facilitate the flow of investments, goods and technology between the two economies.

Basilio said that Taipei is interested in developing the corridor since it will ensure access to the Southeast Asian markets, following the progress of free trade pacts and trade talks between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations along with China, Japan and South Korea—collectively known as Asean + 3.

According to MECO, manufactured goods traded between the two countries included semiconductor components and devices; petroleum products; chemicals; iron and steel; textile yarns, twine and cordages; and machinery, transport equipment and parts.

DA expects to save ₱60B from water systems repair

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULture will veer away from building large-scale irrigation projects and focus on the repair of existing systems which, according to the agency, will translate to savings up to P60 billion in expenditures over the next six years.

Agriculture Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban said the agency would rather spend on the repair of existing irrigation systems, covering about 1.5 million hectares of farmland nationwide.

"If I were to choose between building and rehabilitating irrigation facilities, I will go for rehabilitation," Panganiban said in a recent interview. "We are losing several service areas [because] we are unable to repair the dikes and existing diversion structures."

According to the National Irrigation Administration, irrigation facilities covering over 500,000 hectares of farmland are currently not functioning well.

"De-siltation or the clearing of existing structures will help maximize the potential of these irrigated farmlands," Panganiban said.

According to data from the NIA, the repair of existing systems will cost some P50,000 to P60,000 per hectare. Putting up a new system will cost around P600,000 to P700,000.

This year around P4 billion has been allocated to the NIA for the repair and rehabilitation of existing systems.

Panganiban said that he has seen the results of the timely release of the NIA's budget for repairs before the planting season.

"It has definitely made an impact on our rice production, which we expect to hit 14.2 to 14.4 million metric tons," he said.

Last year, President Macapagal-Arroyo authorized the release of P30 million for the NIA's irrigation projects in Mindanao.

Some P20 million went to finance a component of the Malitubog-Maridagao irrigation project in Carmen and Pikit, North Cotabato.

Also, part of the funds will go to some 2,000 groups of farmers to finance the construction of post-harvest facilities and purchase of farm equipment.

The remaining P10 million will be used to finance irrigation projects in Kidapawan, South Cotabato.

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Preventing theft: Let us count the ways

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

LOSSES are painful for retailers, no matter how small they are. If left unchecked, the small losses of today will inevitably lead to substantial losses in the future.

Retailers in the Philippines know this only too well. With margins no longer as healthy as they used to be due to rising costs and weakening purchasing power of Filipinos, losses are something they can ill afford.

And this holds true for both big and small retailers, no matter what field they are in.

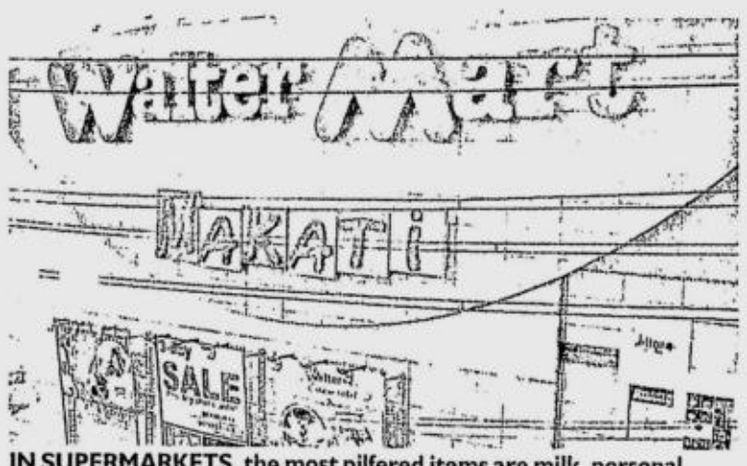
Business Monday recently talked to some leading retail outlets in their industry about how they are fighting the battle against losses on two fronts—internal, which covers employees and suppliers, and external theft by customers or shoplifting.

AT WAFFLE TIME, more auditors were hired to make more frequent outlet checks.

Waffle Time

Having over 300 carts selling waffles all over the Philippines is both a good and a bad thing.

It's good because Waffle Time, the leading operator of food carts selling waffles, has grown so fast in less than five years in the business. But it's also bad because it opens the network up to organized pilferage, largely by the employees themselves.



IN SUPERMARKETS, the most pilfered items are milk, personal care items such as deodorants, toothpaste and imported canned goods.

Waffle Time operations consultant George Wieneke says that in Waffle Time's case, it is not really money that is lost, but the quality of the waffles.

For example, if each batch of waffle mixture is good for 10 waffles, employees will sometimes produce 12 or more, and then pocket the gain from the extra waffles.

As a result, the waffles are not as firm and do not taste as well as if the proper proportion was followed.

There have also been cases of employees using their own fillings, such as hotdogs, thus, earning for themselves a little extra money.

Wieneke says management learned of these compromises to quality from the customers who have complained about their waffles. And because Waffle Time always keeps an ear out to meet customers' expectations, it was able to put in the necessary controls to arrest further losses.

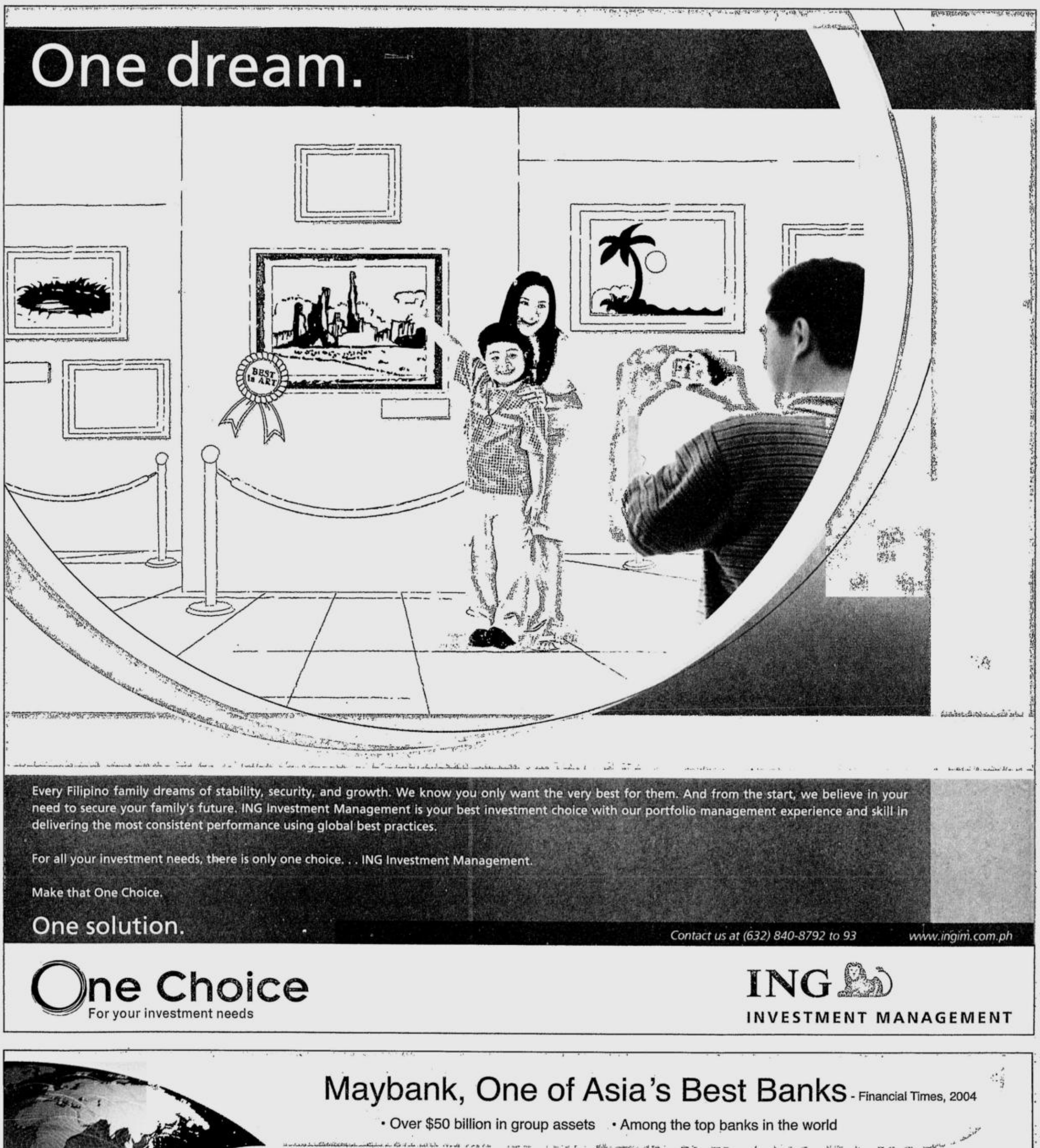
Wieneke says there are now three to five layers of counterchecks to make sure that the employees are preparing and selling the waffles as they should.

More auditors have likewise been hired to make more frequent outlet checks. Accounting is also now being checked weekly, and not monthly to keep a closer look at financial trends.

"These added controls will really take more time and effort, but it is better to do it than to compromise the quality," Wieneke says.

He adds that it is also important for Waffle Time to file cases against erring crew members and even franchisees, if only to show

PREVENTING/ B2-3



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Rich but frustrated? Turn to Rick Warren for guidance

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Baltazar N. Endriga

"WHAT DOES IT PROFIT A MAN IF HE GAINS the whole world but loses his own soul?" This famous quote from the Bible (Matthew 16:26) all but sums up Rick Warren's message on his best selling "The Purpose Driven Life and its companion "The Purpose Driven Church" and "The Purpose Driven Journal". But don't get me wrong. His book and his sessions are far from the fire and brimstone variety that we are all familiar with. His book and his exciting and absorbing live sessions are so down-to-earth and practical that one forgets he is a pastor-preacher.

In 40 short chapters, Warren dramatizes, rightfully, the temporal nature of our lives and how such recognition ought to drive us to live more meaningfully the rest of our lives (If you are now 40 years old, you have probably 10,000 more days to live).

Warren advances the proposition that God created each one of us for a specific purpose that He had decided that at, or even prior to our birth. We can therefore achieve that purpose by first, discovering it and realizing that our lives are just a preparation for the next which is eternity. In Chapter 3 he states "Nothing can compensate for not knowing such purpose—not (worldly) success, wealth, fame, or pleasure. Without a purpose, life is motion without meaning, activity without direction, and events without reason... Life becomes trivial, petty and pointless.

In a lecture he gave last week in Australia, Warren said:

"If you want to know your purpose, look within us and trust the force. I don't know about you but I tried that, it didn't work. I looked within, I did not like what I saw. I just got more confused. The fact is, if you could figure out your purpose by looking within, we all would know it by now. You didn't create you so you can't tell you what your purpose it. Does that make sense? You were made by God and you were made for God and until you understand that, life would never make sense to you. You won't be able to figure it out. If I were to hold up an invention that you have never seen and I said, "Tell me the purpose of this invention." You wouldn't know what it is for and the only way you would know the purpose will be one of the two things. One, talk to the creator, the inventor, the one who made it they could tell you your purpose. Two, read the owner's manual. That's the only way you will ever know the purpose of your life"

In the search for such purpose, Warren directs his reader to discover one's life metaphor or our conscious or unconscious view of how life works and what we expect from it. It determines your expectations, your values, your relationships, your goals and your priorities. He advises that, to arrive at the purposes that God created us for, we must challenge conventional wisdom and replace it with the biblical metaphors: "Let God transform us inwardly... to be able to know the will of God."

His book is designed to get the reader to achieve "spiritual maturity". I find Chapters 15-21, the section on "You Were Formed for God's Family" most helpful in the life of anyone that lives in a community and in any group dynamics.

Some samples:

- In every small group, there is at least one difficult person, usually more than one. These people may have special emotional needs, deep insecurities, irritating mannerisms, dominate conversation, or simply have poor social skills. Warren calls them "unlovely heavenly sandpaper", or EGR's to mean "Extra Grace Required". In Pilipino, the closest term would be KSP or "Kulang Sa Pansin"!

Unfortunately, such person may actually be you or me!

- When someone wrongs you "forgiveness must be immediate, whether or not a person asks for it. If someone hurts you repeatedly, you are commanded by God to forgive them immediately but you are not expected to continue allowing them to hurt you. They must prove they have changed over time."
- "Real fellowship, whether in a marriage, a friendship, or your church, depends on frankness (and honesty). In fact the tunnel of conflict is the passage to intimacy in any relationship. Until you care enough to confront and resolve the underlying barriers, you will never grow close to each other. When conflict is handled correctly, we grow closer to each other by facing and resolving our differences. The Bible says, "In the end, people appreciate frankness more than flattery."

But frankness is not a license to say anything you want, however and whenever you want. It is not rudeness. The Bible tells us there is a right time and a right way to do everything. Thoughtless words leave lasting wounds. "Never use harsh words when you correct an older man, but talk to him as if he were your father. Talk to younger men as if they were your brothers, older women as if they were your mothers and younger women as sisters."

- Restoring a broken fellowship is so important. Jesus said, that it even takes priority over group worship. He said, "If you enter your place of worship, and about to make an offering and you suddenly remember a grudge a friend has against you, abandon your offering, leave immediately go to this friend and make things right. Then and only then come back and work things out with God" (Matthew 5:23-24).

Beyond all these exhortations, Warren makes the observation that in his travels around the world, he has met many people he calls RBF's or "Rich But Frustrated". Frustrated, because they have not discovered their purpose in life. They are disconnected from God as evidenced by a warning light that Warren equates to "worry" which he says can be remedied only by the proper form of worship which he in turn expounds eloquently in chapters 8-14. In summary, he says that "Meaning is far more important than money. The richest man in the world once said "A simple life in the fear-of-God is better than a rich life with a ton of headaches." (Proverbs 15:16)

And as philanthropist Andrew Carnegie declared, "The rich are entrusted for a season with part of the increased wealth of the community, but administering it for the community for better than it did or would have done of itself."

May we call on more Bill Gates, Warren Buffetts or Sandy Weills?

Rick Warren will speak on the topic "Stewardship of Influence and Affluence" during the Dinner Forum for CEOs and Business Leaders organized by the Management Association of the Philippines on July 25, 2006, Tuesday, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Rizal Ballroom of Makati Shangri-La. His wife, Kay, will be the Guest Speaker at the MAP General Membership Meeting on July 24, 2006, Monday, at 12 noon at the Grand Ballroom of Hotel Inter-Continental Manila. For inquiries, please call the MAP Secretariat at 751-1149 to 52.

(The author is Managing Director of the MAP Research and Development Foundation. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

Mobile innovation contest launched

THE GSM ASSOCIATION (GSMA), the global trade association for mobile operators, announced a new mobile innovation competition for young, small and start up companies across Asia that are developing technologies, applications and content for the fast moving mobile space.

Unveiled following the GSMA's board meeting in New Delhi, the Asian Mobile Innovation Awards sponsored by Ericsson will include two categories: for Most Innovative Mobile Application or Content and the Most Innovative Technology.

The competition, which is now open for entry, will culminate at Asia's premier mobile communications event, the 3GSM World Congress Asia 2006 (Singapore, October 16-20), attended by leaders from region-wide mobile operators, manufacturers and players from across the mobile value chain.

The new Mobile Innovation Award, which will be supported by globally-respected mobile wireless technology investors and mobile operators, affords the opportunity for six short-listed finalists to present their ideas during the Mobile Innovation Forum, to a panel of operator and industry experts at the Congress.

The Asian Mobile Innovation is open to small and start up companies whose turnover has not exceeded $US 5 million in their most recent financial year, and who have fewer than 100 employees. The company must be located in the Asia region.

The deadline for entry is August 31, 2006. A panel of independent judges comprising the operator and venture capital representatives will shortlist the six organisations that will be invited to present ideas at the Congress in person in Singapore. One winner in each category will be chosen with awards presented on the evening of Monday, October 16.

The six finalists will also receive an opportunity to exhibit their ideas during the 3GSM World Congress Asia, and also receive an automatically shortlist to the GSMA's Global Mobile Awards at the 3GSM World Congress in Barcelona in February 2007.

Full details of the awards entry criteria, eligibility, rules and the on-line entry form can be found at www.3gsmasia.com/awards

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The Golden Treasure Skills Development Program will conduct a one-day seminar on pefume-making to be held at the Vermont Blooms Unlimited at 9 Anonas Rd., Proj., 3, Quezon City on August 6, Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Topics to be discussed are sourcing of materials, costing. There will be a hands-on experience on how to make perfume spray, cologne spray roll-on perfume, cream type perfume, and gel solid type. Participants will receive certificate of training right after the seminar. All the materials will be provided. For questions, call 952-40-28. 436-78-26, 952-29-34, 951-29-66, and 913-65-51

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Halting the unhappiness trend

JOHN MAXWELL'S MAXIMUM impact partner and author of Time Traps, Todd Duncan, writes for us.

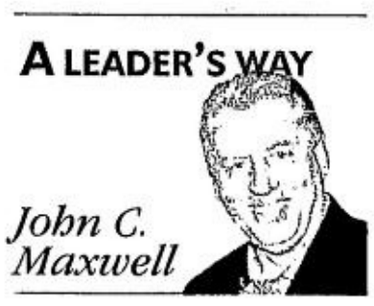
Happy workers make happy people. Unfortunately, half of America's workforce is unhappy on the job. Last year (2005), The Conference Board reported the results of a study on job satisfaction. Their study found that in comparison to the year before (2004), overall job dissatisfaction has declined from 61 percent to 49 percent among workers aged 35-44 and from 57 percent to 48 percent among workers aged 45-54.

Corporate efforts to buck this trend have fallen short. The study revealed that only 30 percent of workers claimed to be satisfied with their company's training or educational programs, 40 percent feel disconnected from their employers, and two out of every three workers do not identify with or feel motivated to drive their employer's goals and objectives. This leads primarily to one conclusion. Showing up for work is no more than an obligation to collect a paycheck, something 25 percent of the workers surveyed admitted to.

With all the unhappiness on the job, it's likely many are affected off the job as well. To determine how affected, it may behoove us to ask a medical professional. Studies over the last several years show that depression remains the costliest of all medical ailments in the US, and stress remains the most prevalent cause of medical and psychological problems.

While corporate efforts to reverse these depressing trends have failed, your efforts can succeed if you understand what to do. According to a recent Time magazine article titled, The New Science of Happiness, you can raise your level of happiness on and off the job by working on the "three components of happiness:

1. Getting more pleasure out of life in general
2. Becoming more engaged in what you do with your time
3. Finding ways of making your life feel more meaningful



Leading psychologists cite three continual acts that help you accomplish these three components.

1. Keeping a gratitude journal. "At the University of California at Riverside, psychologist Sonja Lyubomirsky... has found that taking the time to conscientiously count their blessings once a week significantly increased subjects' overall satisfaction with life over a period of six weeks, whereas a control group that did not keep journals had no such gain." University of California Davis psychologist Robert Emmons found that "the ones who benefited most tended to elaborate more and have a wider span of things they are grateful for."

2. Performing acts of altruism or kindness. The Time article notes, "Doing five kind acts a week, especially all in a single day, gave a measurable boost to Dr. Lyubomirsky's subjects." According to bestselling author and psychologist Martin Seligman, "The single most effective way to turbo-charge your joy is to make a `gratitude visit.' That means writing a testimonial thanking a teacher, pastor or grandparent—anyone to whom you owe a debt of gratitude—and then visiting that person to read him or her the letter of appreciation."

3. Figuring out your strengths and finding new ways to deploy them. According to Dr. Seligman, "Cerebral virtues—curiosity, love of learning—are less strongly tied to happiness than interpersonal virtues like kindness, gratitude, and capacity for love." According to every psychologist interviewed by Time, all studies indicate that happiness seems to be most tied to feeling more connected to others.

"Almost every person," said Dr. Csikszentmihalyi, "feels happier when they're with other people. It's paradoxical because many of us think we can hardly wait to get home and be alone with nothing to do, but that's a worst-case scenario. If you're alone with nothing to do, the quality of your experience really plummets." Ironically, all three continual acts involve interaction with other people and that might possibly the key to remaining happy--on or off the job.

For information on John Maxwell's in-house or public leadership or teamwork workshops, e-mail at maxwell@inspire.ph or call 813-2732/03.

Preventing theft: Let us count the ways

From page B2-1

them that Waffle Time means business and is willing to go to great lengths to protect its products' integrity.

"For us, a loss of 10 percent is still tolerable, going higher than that will be a cause for great concern," he says.

Novecento

For men's clothes manufacturer Novecento, manual checking is still the best way to combat pilferage.

Warren Habaluyas, head of Novecento's operations, says that while having a good software system will go a long way in addressing theft and inventory losses, there is still something to be said about actual physical checking by management and employees.

Habaluyas explains that physical checking of inventory every month allows management to immediately detect discrepancies in volume and value of sales, which can be due to pilferage.

Novecento also instructs cashiers and sales staff in each of the five branches to give a daily sales summary.

To prevent possible collusion, Novecento periodically rotates staff, so they won't get too comfortable with each other and give in to the temptation to cover up theft, if there is any.

"We also believe in hands-on management, which means that we go to the different branches at all hours of the day, just to keep people on their toes," he says.

Novecento, however, has still invested in a point-of-sale system, primarily to detect inventory and sales.

"With our system, we will know what products need to be immediately replenished because inventory is running low," Habaluyas says.

Having a working inventory and loss prevention system is part of Novecento's plans to eventually open the network to franchising.

Habaluyas says the company is in the process of manualizing all its operations in preparation for franchising and the entry of new investors.

"We plan to strengthen the Novecento brand and then have between 30 and 40 stores in five years," he says.

Ansons

Manual checking of inventory also works well for Ansons, one of the Philippines' oldest department stores, specializing in appliances.

Kenneth Ng, vice president for operations of Ansons, says in an interview that the Ansons chain has been able to keep losses due to pilferage down to less than one percent of its total sales because of old-fashioned vigilance and sales controls.

Ng says it also helps that Ansons sells products such as refrigerators, washing machines and television sets, which are quite hard to spirit out of their stores, thus, there is not much need to invest in sophisticated radio frequency tags to set off alarms, for example.

What Ansons invests in is controls, such as having customers show passes to the guard before they can take out their purchases.

He says similar systems are used in the warehouses, to make sure that all products that go out of them are properly documented when they reach the different stores.

"But we are careful about keeping the balance between security and customer convenience," Ng says.

To prevent losses due to internal pilferage, Ng says Ansons takes extra effort to study prospective hires to se if they have the moral fortitude needed for the job.

"We have been lucky so far in the hiring of our people," he says.

Ansons has five branches all over Metro Manila and says plans are underway to expand in the next few years, building on its 40-year heritage and reputation for selling goods at low prices.

WalterMart

For many of the Philippines' supermarkets, pilferage or shoplifting inevitably becomes part of operations.

Cynthia L. Siy, category management and systems administration manager of WalterMart supermarkets, says among the most pilfered items are milk, personal care items such as deodorants, toothpaste and imported canned goods.

Siy says these incidents point to the fact that there are many poor and unemployed people around WalterMart, which has made a name for being the prime community center in areas where it has branches.

"They get these items because they want to feed their family," Siy says, "and also because these items are very easy to sell outside by syndicates."

Siy says many professional shoplifters have devised very creative ways to get items out of the store.

There are those who wear baggy clothes to hide cans of milk and meat products. There are also those who wear pants with very long pockets to hide small, but valuable items such as batteries and cigarettes.

Siy says that for WalterMart, the best way to combat shoplifting or to at least keep it to a minimum is to keep vigilant sales people on the floor.

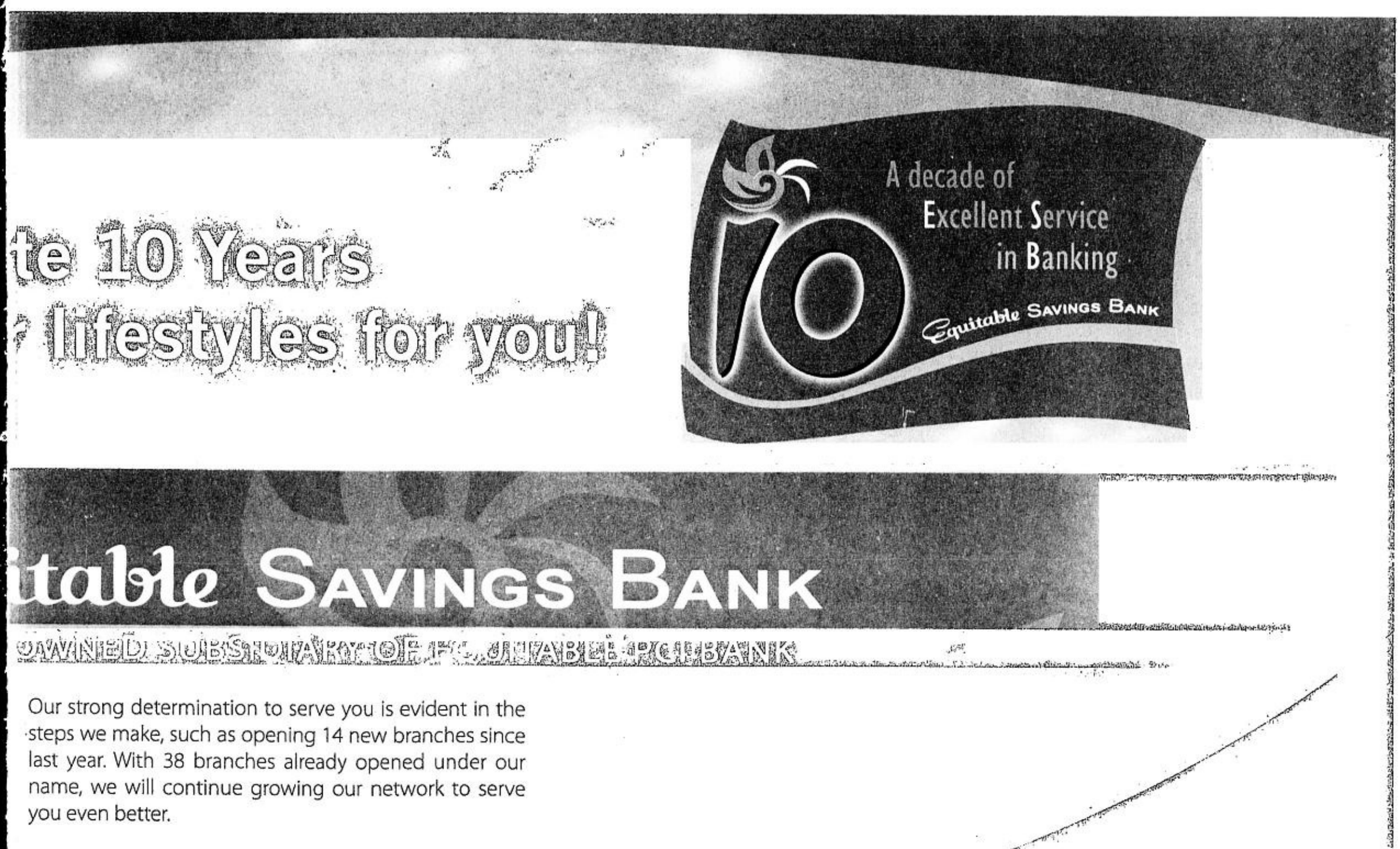
She explains that while WalterMart has invested in close circuit cameras to monitor the comings and goings of people on the floor, it only works as long as there are people looking at them all the time.

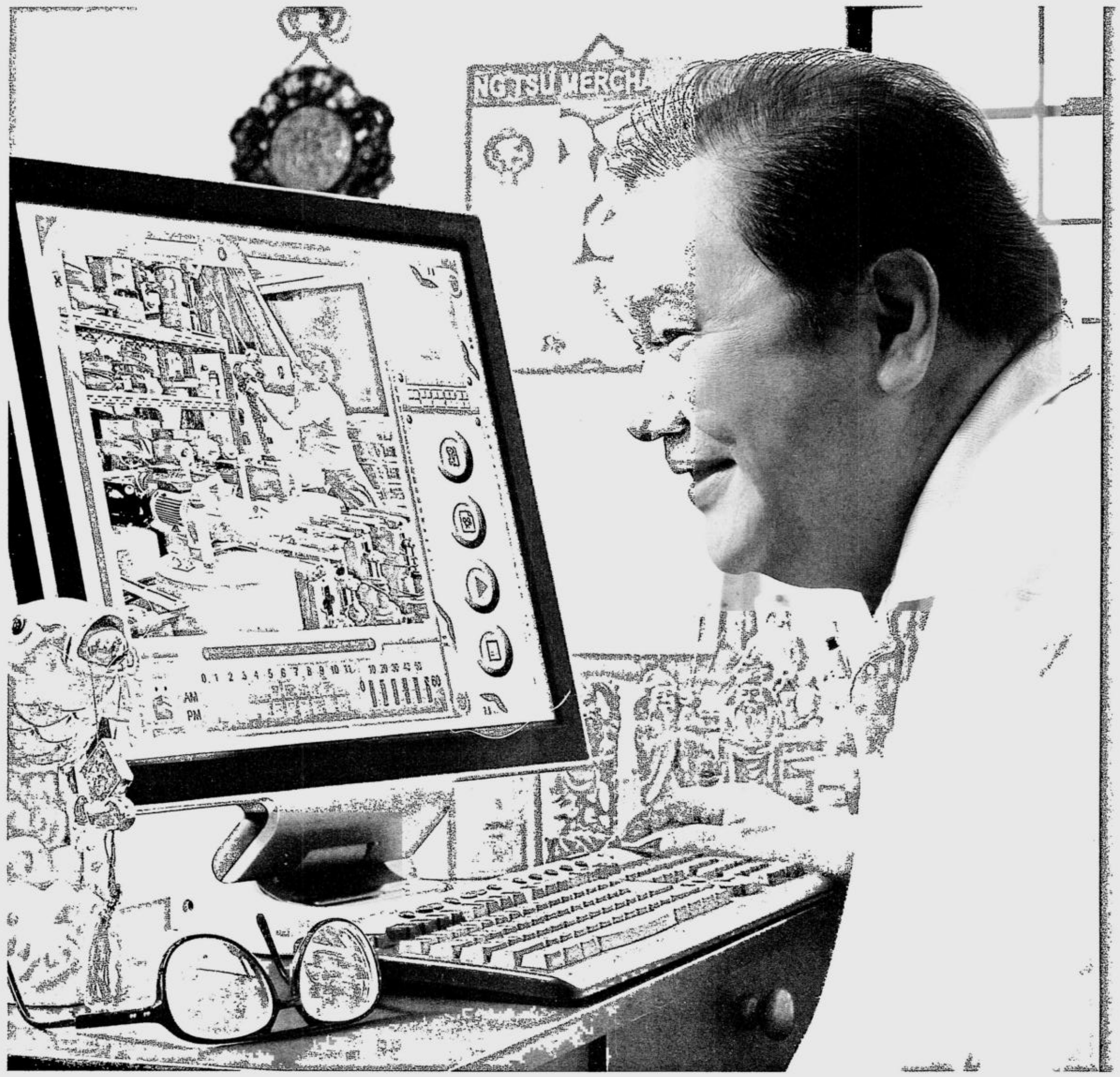
Siy says what has worked better for WalterMart is having a lot of people on the shop floor, explaining that there is nothing more that scares off would-be shoplifters than people looking at them.

Siy adds that WalterMart has designed the shop floor in such a way that the items most prone to pilferage are positioned near the cashiers. These include the milk, wine, cigarettes and over the counter medicine.

The idea, she says, is to keep sales loss due to pilferage down to less than 1 percent of total sales.

"If it gets over 1 percent, that will be too much," she says.





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Before you photocopy that book. . .

RP on watchlist as losses to book piracy in country reach P2 billion annually

ON A TYPICAL CAMPUS, there is one place that never lacks for business: Photocopying stations. With the reams of reading materials assigned each semester, the photocopier is a godsend to students who reproduce anywhere from a few pages to whole books on a daily basis, unknowingly committing copyright infringements and perpetrating the growing scourge of the book publishing industry: Book piracy.

Reprography, or photocopying, is prevalent in schools all over the world. Studies culled by the National Book Development Board (NBDB) show that each year, some 300 billion illegal photocopies of copyrighted material are made worldwide, translating to 570,000 photocopies made each minute, and 1.5 billion books of 200 pages each annually.

With the rising cost of education, students resort to photocopying when the books assigned to them are too expensive.

In other cases, scarcity of books comes into play. Sometimes, the required textbooks aren't available locally, and students photocopy the books to keep up with their readings. When more than 5 percent of a book is photocopied, copyright infringement occurs.

Bootleg bounty

"On the surface, there's no harm done—just one student photocopying a book," states Book Development Association of the Philippines (BDAP) officer and former Philippine Reproduction Rights Organization (PRRO) chair Rolando de Vera. "But it's become a way of life for most students. The publishing industry suffers, but it's the writers who lose because they don't get royalties if people photocopy their books."

Unauthorized mass reproduction of books is another problem facing the publishing industry. New technology makes it easier to produce pirated copies. All a culprit needs are two copies of the original, a scanner, a computer equipped with optical recognition software, and a rotary press to churn out multiple copies in a few days' time. Sophisticated technology also makes it difficult to distinguish a pirated copy from the original: They can look exactly the same.

Pirates have even grown organized in peddling their wares.

"Pirates have representatives roaming schools, offering their inventory to students," De Vera discloses. "Most are engaged on a print-to-order basis, avoiding stockpiling pirated goods, making them difficult to catch."

Jorge Abiva Garcia, president of Abiva Publishing relates, "I once made a sales call to a regular client, and to my surprise, they appeared to have recently acquired the educational materials that we are exclusively distributing, but our records showed that we had not sold them anything yet. We found out that they had purchased pirated materials, and the client had no idea that they were duped."

Escalating crisis

Pirates prey on students in highly-specialized fields of study, making door-to-door rounds in college campuses, law schools, hospitals, and nursing schools. They offer illegal reprints of books on subjects such as engineering, law and medicine. Sold at a vastly cheaper rate, pirated copies provide unfair competition to the originals, deny the author income from his creativity, and decrease tax revenues for the government.

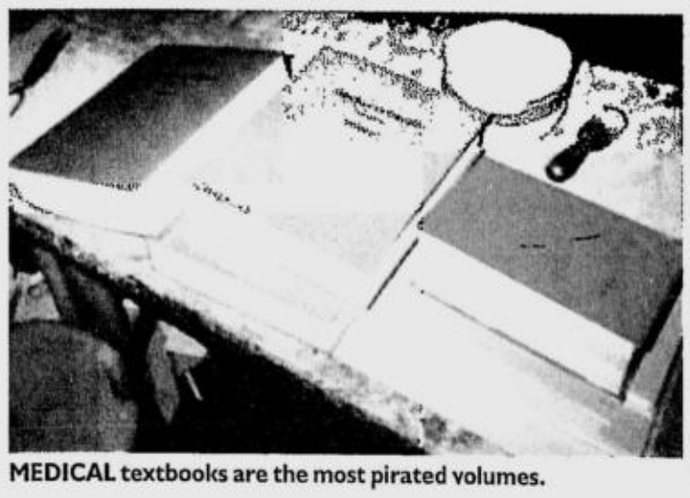
The popularity of person-to-person (P2P) networks and increasing Internet usage in the country has also given way to another form of book piracy. E-books (electronic books) are downloaded effortlessly and without cost, then indiscriminately "burned."

Studies by the Inter-American Publishers Group estimates illegal reprinting at a whopping 50 billion book pages a year. Book piracy has evolved as a rapidly growing trade in developing countries in Asia and Latin America over the past two decades, involving greater profits than the legal book trade.

Book piracy has kept the Philippines in the 2005 US Priority Watch List for the fourth year running, based on International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA) recommendations, due to widespread copyright infringements in the country. Losses to book piracy in the Philippines have reached alarming dimensions, estimated at $48M or over P2 billion annually.

The US Priority Watch List is part of a Special 301 Review, a requirement under the US Trade Act of 1974, which is used as basis for actions on US foreign trade partners. The re-

BEFORE/ B3-3



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Dried fish industry can sink or swim

MERLA Quismondo, 36, sells assorted dried fish in her stall in Damortis town of La Union.

PHOTOS BY EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

CLARITA Ulip, 49, sells Boneless Bagoong for P25 per big bottle and P15 per small bottle.

By Peter La. Julian
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAMORTIS, STO. TOMAS, La Union—When Merla Quismondo, 36, came here in 2000, it was to start her *daing* (sun-dried fish) business. She brought with her P1,200 as seed capital.

Quismondo began as a dried fish vendor, carrying her wares in a *bilao* (receptacle made of woven bamboo strips) to sell to motorists.

"I had to learn the business the hard way," she says.

It was a series of ups and downs for Quismondo, a native of Bugallon, Pangasinan. Her seed capital was wiped out in a few months. She dug deeper into her savings until there was none.

She had to borrow money from her sister, her friends, and acquaintances, or even from strangers. She was a good debtor and people trusted her with their money.

"I never borrowed from the Bombay (Indian lenders) through their 5-6 money lending scheme," she says.

Biggest fish dealer

Soon her business began to pick up and Quismondo, the dried fish vendor, is now considered the biggest wholesaler and dealer of dried fish in this "dried fish capital of the North."

She would not say how much her dried fish business is worth nor would she admit that she was building a "*katas ng* (fruit of the) dried fish business"—a big concrete house nearby, according to dried fish stall owners.

Quismondo, who owns a 24-hour restaurant at the junction of the Damortis-Dagupan road near a gasoline station here, attributes her success to patience, perseverance, determination, sacrifice and plenty of luck.

There was brisk business when the INQUIRER visited Quismondo's dried fish stall fish in front of her restaurant. Resting on the bamboo benches were sacks of dried fish that included *pusit* (squid), *espada* or *bulong-unas* (hair tail fish), *danggit (*siganid), *sapsap* (slip mouth) and *dalag-baybay* (lizard fish).

Most of the fish, like the popular sapsap and dalag-baybay including *padas* (a small gray, flat fish made into fish sauce or bagoong) and *monamon* (boneless dilis), were caught in the nearby sea.

The squid was bought from as far as Bicol, the Visayas, Malabon in Metro Manila and Aparri, Cagayan.

Quismondo buys them fresh from suppliers and Sonia Ebreo, another fish vendor she had befriended in her earlier years, dries them in the sun at her house with the help of her husband and five children.

Quismondo used to buy dried fish from suppliers here, but she now supplies most of them. Wholesalers from Metro Manila and those from other regions also buy dried fish from her.

"She (Quismondo) can now dictate the price of dried fish we sell," says one of the dried fish stall owners here.

Problems

But not all dried fish stall owners here are as lucky as Quismondo.

"*Kanayon nga agparikutkami iti umanay a puonan* (Our perennial problem is bigger seed capital)," Natividad Felizarte, 58, tells the INQUIRER. She owns one of the dried fish stalls that line both sides of the Damortis section of the national highway here.

Felizarte's parents were one of the pioneers of the business in the 70s. The sea here then had abundant bulong-unas, sapsap and dalag-baybay. Fishermen's wives would dry the fish that were not sold and sell these to passersby.

Felizarte, the village chief of Damortis, says they obtained a group loan once from a bank, but only a few settled the loan and the bank promptly stopped lending them money.

So they relied, and are still relying, on the Indian "5-6" money lending scheme. But because repayment was on a daily basis, they only borrowed in small amounts.

Still, there are risk takers, preferring to get big loans from the Indians rather than go to the bank with its many requirements, and buy the commodity on wholesale.

The ready supply comes in handy when buyers come in droves (usually motorists or *balikbayan* coming from Ilocos who want to buy the famous Damortis daing) or when there are "big orders" for dried fish.

Felizarte says they were reviving the Samneda (Samahan ng mga Negosyante ng Damortis) that had flopped because the members were bad borrowers. This time they are determined to make it work.

With a bigger capital, they could buy more dried fish or source fresh fish elsewhere, especially during the lean and rainy months of June to August. at this time of the year, when it is difficult to dry fish in the sun.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources in the Ilocos tries to help the dried fish traders by providing technical assistance and holding seminars on sanitation, better manufacturing process and packaging not only for local consumers but for the export market.

The peak season for dried fish buying is during Christmas, the Holy Week, summer and other holidays, when balikbayan and domestic tourists visit the Ilocos provinces and Baguio City.

"Otherwise, it is just pure luck if I make a big sale on an ordinary day," said Felizarte.

DRYING Bonuan bangus, P400 a kilo

FELICIDAD Patungan,91, has been selling dried fish all her life.

A DRIED fish stall

Heirloom recipés find way to mall

LOLA BEBENG, ALing Maring, Aling Lucing, Betty's, and Aling Naty—these folksy sounding food outlets are named in honor of the women whose prized recipés they serve. And these heirloom recipés have found their place to the mall to be enjoyed by a whole new generation of shoppers at the newly opened SM City Clark.

Capampangan, after all, have long been known for their wonderful cooking tradition and great passion for food. And Lola Bebeng's Halo Halo, Aling Maring's Deli, Befty's Native Cakes, Aling Lucing's Sisig and Aling Naty's Cabalen Sisig showcase traditional Pampanga cuisine at its best, with innovations to suit today's market from second generation family members.

Lola Bebeng's Halo Halo

Lola Bebeng, a member of prominent clans of the Ocampos and Hizons in San Fernando, loved to cook for her family and friends.

One of her family's cherished recipés was her *halo-halo*, with its to die for mix of *saging na saba*, beans, cream and whole kernel corn topped with freshly roasted and crunchy *pinipig*, delicious lecheflan, melts in your mouth *pastillas de leche*, and ube ice cream.

This recipe was passed on to Lola Bebeng's daughter Nieves Benipayo, whose daughter former beauty queen and model Marina Benipayo now shares her grandmother's goodies at the Lola Bebeng's Halo Halo booth at SM City Clark.

NIEVES Dayrit Abad Santos

Realizing that a business would be a different setting for family recipés, Marina, under the supervision of her mom, decided to stick as much to Lola Bebeng's original recipés.

"We have a passion for good food," says Marina, "that's why we wanted to share our family recipés with others."

Apart from her famous halo-halo, Lola Bebeng's serves the family's favorite recipés like special pork meat *dinuguan*, *pancit palabok*, and huge *pandesals* filled with *giniling*, *kesong puti*, and *adobo*.

Betty's Native Cakes

Everyday, almost 5,000 *bilaos* of Befty's Native Cakes are made in their central kitchen and distributed to its ten branches in Tarlac and Pampanga, including its new outlet at SM City Clark.

Not bad for Beatriz Junio of La Paz, Tarlac, who says she started selling *kakanin* in the old public market in Tarlac City in 1972 with a capital of P200.

Her best sellers include delicacies like b*ibingkang duman*, *kapit* toppings (sticky ground rice cake with young coconut toppings), kapit rolls (sticky ground rolls with latik), *halea ube*, *bibingkang kanin*, cassava cake, *butchi*, *putong puti*, and *maja blanca*.

The SM City Clark outlet is Betty's second foray into the malls, the first one opened at SM City Pampanga also this year.

Aling Maring's Deli

Ermita Tamayo or Aling Maring thought complementing the PX goods she sold with deli items in the 1970s, and bringing her own special recipés to her Nepo Mart stall.

Her kakanin—*sapin sapin*, *tibok tibok* and cassava cake—and later her *pancit* and *lumpia* with peanut sauce soon attracted a growing clientele.

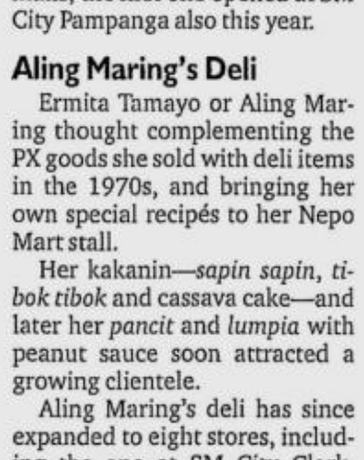
Aling Maring's deli has since expanded to eight stores, including the one at SM City Clark, which is being handled by her daughters Lynette and Jennifer.

It was Lynette who urged her mother to open an outlet in the mall. Mother and daughter work closely together with Aling Maring "still supervising the daily business operation of our pilot kitchen, making sure that our staff prepares the kakanin in her traditional way.

While Lynette has trained extensively under her mother, she has opted to add rice dishes in their menu to better serve their Food Court customers.

And it seems to be paying off with new recipés like roast beef, chicken roll, chicken cordon bleu topped with cream sauce complementing old favorites ube gabi, sapin sapin, and maja blanca.

Apart from its Food Court outlet, Aling Maring's has a takeout booth at SM City Clark's transport terminal for *pasalubong* such as cassava, *suman*, and *pichie pichie*.



BEATRIZ Junio of La Paz, Tarlac

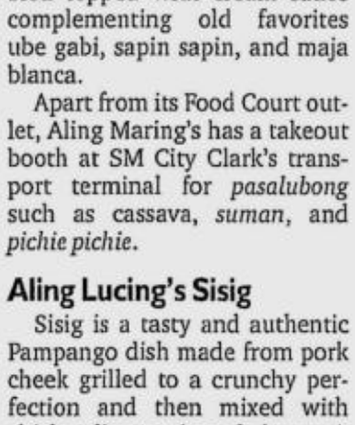
Aling Lucing's Sisig

Sisig is a tasty and authentic Pampango dish made from pork cheek grilled to a crunchy perfection and then mixed with chicken liver, onions, *kalamansi*, and spiked with fresh *sili*.

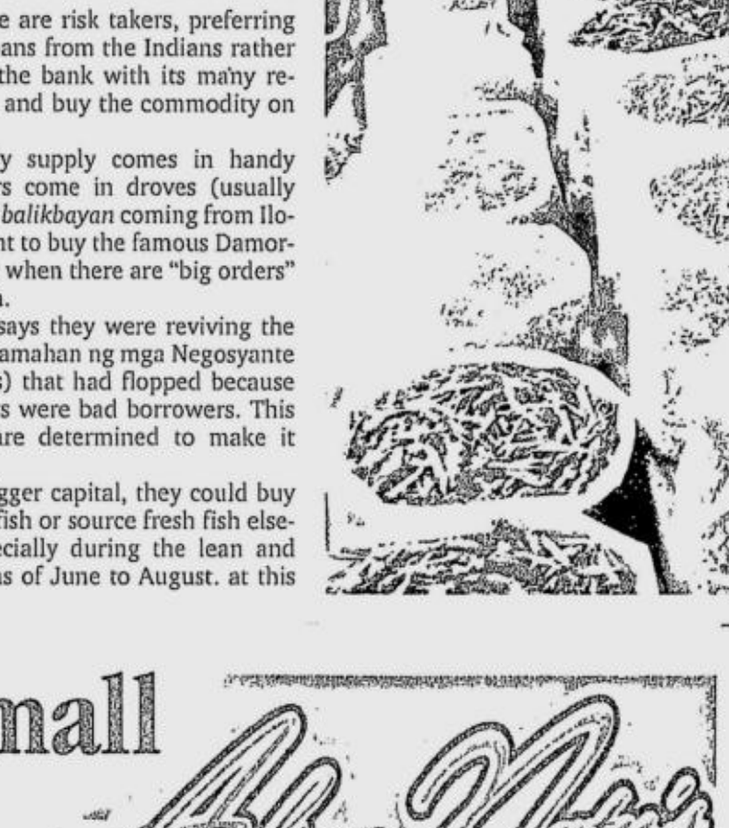
And Kapampangans will tell you that the best *sisig* in town can be found in an area known as crossing at Valdez Street in Angeles City.

Lucia Cunanan or Aling Lucing is one of the well known sisig vendors.

Aling Lucing started selling sisig at her store at the crossing thrity yers ago, and since then hasn't looked back. She now has 11 branches, including mall outlets in Pampanga, Bulacan, and Valenzuel, and of course, SM City Clark.



ALING Lucing opened 30 years ago



THIS EATERY started as a barbecue stand

To this date, Aling Lucing still does the marketing for ingredients for the branch at Valdez Street, while her three daughters lead the management for the mall outlets. With more than a thousand customers a day, Aling Lucing's Sisig has introduced other innovations like serving Sisig Combo Meals—sisig with fried chicken, fried bangus, sizzling *pusit*, and hotdog.

Aling Naty's Cabalen sisig

Natividad D. Bernardo or Aling Naty and her husband Apung Tino started their food business with a barbecue stand also at crossing in Valdez Street. While their chicken and pork barbecue were bestsellers, it was her Sizzling Sisig that made her stand out from her contemporaries.

She has not only mastered this specialty, but has expanded her business to include at mall outlet at SM City Clark's Hypermarket. Aling Naty's Cabalen Sisig is known for its fast, host, delicious, and clean food at affordable prices, a trademark she brings to her mall outlet.

Lola Bebeng's Halo Halo, Aling Mating's Deli, Betty's Native Cakes, Aling Lucing's Sisig, Aling Naty's Cabalen Sisig are located at SM City Clark in Angeles City.

Business . . .

From page B3-4

the way their name is used to describe an eating treat that not really a treat, or what is called "Dutch treat."

Going to securities trading, when you read about "circuit breakers" being in operation in the stock market, don't get the impression that the Philippine Stock Exchange has moved to the power generation business.

Those electrical technology-sounding words refer to the measures the exchange has put in place to temporarily stop trading when the prices drop by a certain percentage on a given period.

By suspending the transactions, the exchange is able to undertake the proper remedial measures to prevent further deterioration of the market.

Also, "wallflower" is the description given to a stock that hardly attracts investors or is not included in the active trading list of the stockbrokers.

The lack of interest may be traced to either the issuing company's unsatisfactory financial fundamentals or unimpressive trading track record.

Job loss

What is it about "golden parachute" that its mere mention makes executives of the country's big corporations break into a big smile?

That's the term used to describe the generous compensation that high-ranking company officials will be entitled to if their services are terminated for reasons not traceable to their fault or negligence.

For example, in case the company is bought or merged with another company, the top honchos of the acquired company who lose their jobs in the process will receive hefty separation pay, cost-free acquisition of company luxury cars and other financial perks.

The economic largesse is supposed to make up (and more) for the bruised ego and tarnished pride of the suddenly jobless executives.

After the psychological impact of the unceremonious relief has died down, the affected executive discreetly sounds off his friends and contacts in the industry to find out if his expertise has willing well-paying takers.

A negative response would compel him to either try his hand in entrepreneurship with its attendant financial risks or make the most of the interest earnings of his "golden parachute."

(For feedback, please write to <rpalabrica@inquirer. com. ph>.)

Out-of-box. . .

From page B3-4

of-the-box thinking that will make their brands not only a part of the consumer's life, but proven accountable for sales increase.

Grabbing the attention of the consumer with a surprising execution is not enough. Entertaining her with a cleverly crafted ad is not enough.

Without fresh insights, without out-of-the-box thinking, out-of-the-box crafting is hallow. Dud.

This ancient Chinese proverb proves that the principle of communication hasn't changed.

Only the style and channels of delivery changed.

"Tell me and I forget.
Show me and I remember.
Involve me and I understand."

(Feedback at dfgallardo@gasso.com.ph; telephone 8678516)

DOT turns office into showcase

THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM (DOT) has relocated and transformed its office in Osaka, Japan, into a Philippine tourism showcase.

"As the Philippines is committed to upgrading the quality of service to Japanese customers and to our patrons and partners in the travel industry, the Department of Tourism has moved to a better, more strategic and more accessible location in the bustling Chuo-ku business district of Osaka," said DOT Secretary Joseph Ace H. Durano.

"The new Tourism office along Honmachi Dori brings us closer to the travel trade. Honmachi Dori is where you find the offices of major airlines and travel agencies, and an infinite number of travel-related establishments within its radius. It allows us to reach out to a greater audience, thereby increasing the level of awareness on the Philippines among the Japanese," Durano added.

The opening of the new Osaka Tourism office complements Travel Café Philippines in Tokyo, which opens its doors to the public tomorrow. Both the Osaka Tourism office and Travel Café Philippines (Tokyo) are designed to serve as information hubs on the Philippines, providing the environment for the Japanese to plan their travel to the Philippines.

At the new Osaka Tourism office, visitors can browse through a vast collection of resource materials and travel references: From books to videos shown on the plasma screen. An information officer will likewise be available to personally assist guests, answer queries on the Philippines as well as recommend travel itineraries.

"Veering away from the traditional office setup, the Osaka Tourism office is designed to showcase some of the best talents of the Philippines," Durano explained.

Before you photocopy that book. . .

From page B3-1

port urged that the Philippines enforce strongholds on protecting intellectual property rights, or else face sanctions such as being stripped of duty-free assistance from the United States.

In February 2006, an out-of cycle review was conducted on the Philippines due to the implementation of the Optical Media Act and accession to the World Intellectual Property Organization (Wipo) Internet treaties. The Philippines was lowered to Watch List status, and is currently exempted from a regular yearly review of compliance with IIPA requirements provided that the government sustains its efforts against piracy.

Long road ahead

"We are a long way from curbing out book piracy in the country," expresses De Vera. "We lack the teeth, funds and the willpower in implementing the Copyright Law and the Intellectual Property Code (IPC)."

Unlike US and China where intellectual property rights are included in the educational curriculum, the Philippines lacks an educational campaign to prevent piracy. Students are not aware of intellectual property rights violations and worse, their teachers encourage them by providing material for copying.

Schools must set the example for their students. "The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) should come up with regulations on photo-

DE VERA

copying on campus establishments. They should also have a memorandum of agreement with the Intellectual Property Organization (IPO) penalizing students/professors caught carrying pirated books on campus," De Vera recommends.

Few people are aware they are committing piracy, and those who are aware get away with it because they do not get convicted. The only existing conviction is the case against Catherine Marquez of Multilinks Book Supply in 2004. Unfortunately, while the PNP-CIDG has issued a warrant of arrest for her, she has gone missing since the raid and cannot be located.

Book piracy continues to thrive because of the lack of initiatives from the government in apprehending the culprits. Pirates continue to produce and sell illegal copies, and government monitoring, inspections and enforcement have not occurred.

Most of the enforcement in the country is self-initiated. US publishers have worked steadily with the authorities at the PNP and NBI, because the Intellectual Property Organization (IPO) does not conduct raids in behalf of publishers. "It's the private sector who has to spend, organize and conduct raids in coordination with the authorities," stresses De Vera.

"The government needs to be more pro-active in the campaign against book piracy. We need actions, raids and enforcement of the copyright law, and not records of meetings, hearings, or symposiums," De Vera further recommends.

The cooperation of the publishing industry is also necessary. The BDAP is currently working on a website, www.philippinetextbooks.com, to fight book piracy by helping students, professors, and universities to find licensed, locally-reprinted textbooks at affordable prices, while the NBDB regularly holds forums and symposiums for the campaign against book piracy.

The NBDB also urges those in the publishing industry to join the PRRO. Established by NBDB in 2001, the PRRO is a nonstock, nonprofit organization that aims to collectively manage the reprographic rights of local authors, publishers, and other copyrights-owners as well as to distribute revenues to its members.

"The government cannot solve this problem alone," Gonzalez avers. It needs the support of the rights-holders themselves. They should join forces with other copyrights-holders and do their part to combat the infringement of their rights."

In an effort to spread the word about their crusade, BDAP joins the 26th Manila International Book Fair (MIBF) on Aug. 31 to Sept. 4 at the World Trade Center, Pasay City.

With the theme "Make it a Habit!" the MIBF once again unites every major player in the publishing industry in its continuing efforts to promote books and reading.

In its 27 years, the MIBF has been instrumental in promoting books and literacy by giving publishers a venue to discuss and develop books, promote new titles and authors, and improve the quality of published works.

The 27th Manila International Book Fair is organized by Primetrade Asia, Inc. in partnership with publishers

For details, call 890-0661 or 896-0682, or e-mail bookfair@primetradeasia.com ***Blooey Singson, Contributor***

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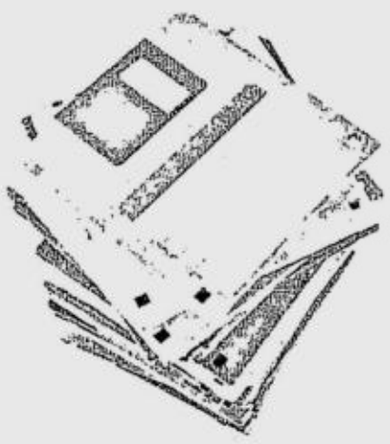

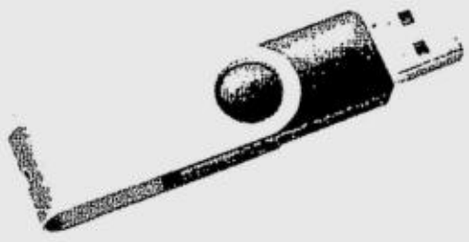

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BUSINESSMonday

Business jargon

LIKE OTHER AREAS OF ACTIVITY, the business sector has its share of words and phrases that are unique to their line of work.

To the uninitiated, the jargon used by investment bankers, financial advisers and those engaged in securities trading can sometimes be confusing. Some of those terms seem to have no relation to their subject.

The phrase "Chinese wall" should not be interpreted in its literal sense. It refers to the imaginary barrier that a company that offers investment and securities trading services should maintain between those two activities.

Taking off from the idea behind the construction of the Great Wall of China, the "wall" is meant to prevent the sharing of information by the personnel of the two groups.

They are supposed to maintain an arm's length relationship with each other in handling the data they collate in connection with their respective assignments.

For example, under existing rules on "insider trading," securities traders are prohibited from using information coming from their colleagues in the investment

Corporate Securities Info

Raul J. Palabrica

group, which are generally not available to the public, in deciding when to sell or buy stocks.

Instruments

A "plain vanilla" transaction or financial instrument has nothing to do with the preferred ice cream flavor of the person who uses that term.

It simply means that the subject of the description is of the standard variety, or one that does not contain features that differentiate it from others of a similar nature.

Because of that, not much effort goes into the preparation of the covering documents. A "template" contract of sorts is used for this purpose and the blank spaces are simply filled in.

Thus, if the phrase is used in relation to a loan, the credit agreement contains the usual terms of payment, representations and warranties that lending institutions require of their borrowers.

No frills, no special concessions. The debtor just has to pay the loan in accordance with the creditor's set procedures.

For obvious reasons, financial advisers and lawyers do not look with favor to this kind of transaction because they cannot charge high fees for their efforts.

Public sale

Another colorful terminology is "Dutch auction" which the Bureau of Treasury sometimes conducts if it sells treasury bills to raise funds for the government.

In this kind of auction, the price of an item that is being offered for sale, e.g., T-bills, is gradually lowered until somebody expresses interest in buying it.

This procedure is a total contrast to the traditional concept of auction sales where the object for sale is sold at the highest price it can fetch from the bidding parties.

It is unfortunate the Dutch people have been associated with this business aberration, just like

BUSINESS/B3-3

Out-of-box thinking vs out-of-box crafting

By Nonoy Gallardo
Chair, Gallardo & Associates, Inc.

AND THE WINNER IS...

In advertising, out-of-the-box creative executions win awards.

Out-of-the-boxers are those clever and witty and oftentimes amusing and memorable and attention-grabbing pieces of work that agencies churn out for their "special clients". They are very watchable, to borrow a term from an expat creative consultant.

We are told that that's what our industry need to be producing collectively today—not the formulaic crap that we've been tossing at consumers all these years. These are the kind of work that will make the world sit up and notice us, according to another creative person.

Agree.

But that trumpet call is hardly new. I remember when I was a copy trainee three decades and several years ago, that was already the creative challenge. Break the mold. Get thee out of the box.

The difference is, we were told to break the mold not in terms of executions but in terms of thinking. We were exhorted to get out of the box and search for fresh consumer insights—always.

Fresh insight

We learned that fresh insight is what stimulates fresh thinking. Fresh thinking is what generates category-shaking strategies.

And when the fresh thinking is done, the fresh stories just pour out. That's what we learned.

Let me cite some cases from both ancient and recent history.

Bill Bernbach's classic Volkswagen campaign in the 60's is an example of fresh thinking giving birth to a category-shaking strategy that resulted in a slew of fresh stories, the repositioning of The American car and the end Detroit's "Planned Obsolescence".

The long running Marlboro campaign is another great example. Today's generation never heard of the line, "You got a lot to like with a Marlboro—Filter, flavor, flip top box". Generic. Designed to lure women smokers. Didn't work. Then it was dramatically repositioned as the ultimate macho cigarette using the ultimate American macho icon—the cowboy in its countless executions. Guess what? Marlboro became the hottest selling brand in the world. Fresh insight, out-of-the-box thinking.

Locally, the fresh insight and out-of-the-box thinking behind the relaunch of Palmolive soap in the mid 80's, shook the beauty soap category, broke the charts and changed the market share rankings with Palmolive zooming up to first from a poor third.

"I can feel it!" Made the brand a friend, a confidante not a distant beauty queen or a celebrity actress that the everyday woman will never become.

Out-of-the-box

The fresh insight and out-of-the-box thinking behind the relaunch of Cosmos in the late 80's forever changed the image of that domestic soft drink brand and upped the its market value by generating record sales. Rumor has it that because it became so much of a threat to a global brand—they bought it.

More recently, Stresstabs was an irrelevant multi-vitamin brand to the stressed out Filipino consumer before fresh insight and out-of-the-box thinking moved it to the realm of "beauty products".

"Stress will make you look older than you think"—a fresh story that a global personal care product is now trying to adopt.

In my entire advertising career, clients always ask, "Will our ad sell?" This is the question that I respond to with a lot of focus. "Will our ad win an award?" is the question my client do not ask.

Fresh insight and out-of-the-box thinking is what our clients need. Fresh insight and out-

TITLE/B3

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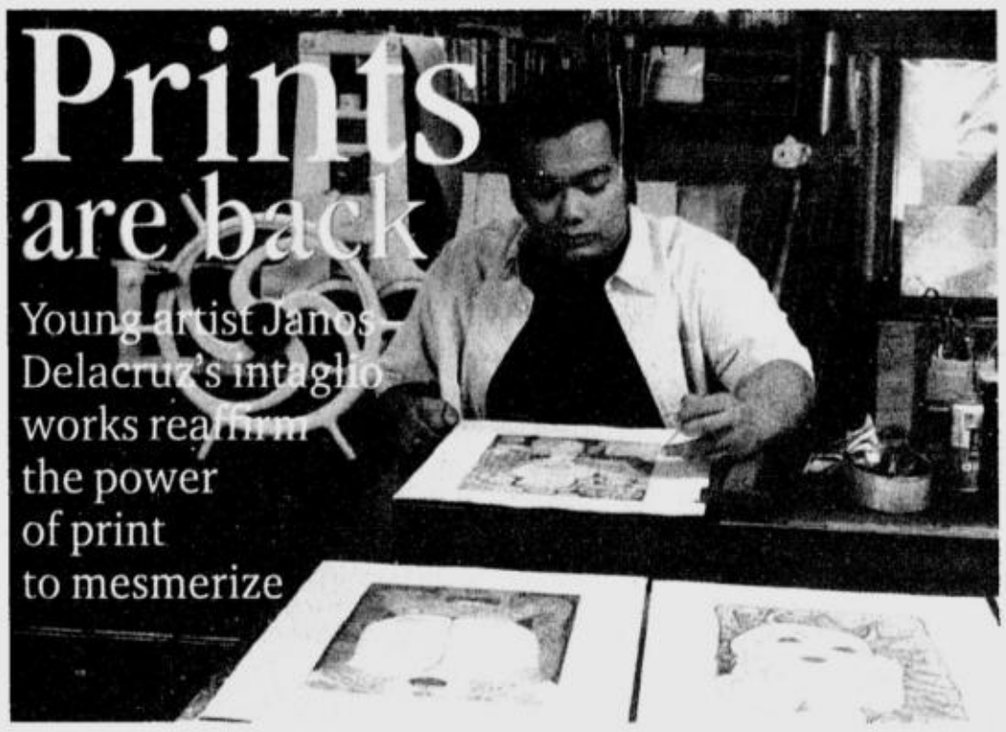
Prints are back

Young artist Janos Delacruz's intaglio works reaffirm the power of print to mesmerize



By Lito B. Zulueta

IT IS NOT AS IF THEY HAD been gone, but prints have lately been marking inroads and assays that should amount to a celebrated homecoming or a new spring.

The recent nomination of Manuel Rodriguez Sr., who has acquired dual citizenship, to the National Artists pantheon seems to have confirmed the revitalized state of print affairs, as well as exhibits by Pandy Aviado, Ross Capili, Fil Delacruz, Raul Isidro, and other stalwarts of the print kingdom.

Credit for the comeback of print should perhaps go to the Printmakers Association of the Philippines headed by Isidro. The PAP has been holding annual group exhibits in key art places to widen the audience for prints. It has also toured the country to hold seminar-workshops for Fine Arts students and other aspiring artists.

"SWORDFIGHT of a Conscience"

Perhaps because the PAP artists have widened the appreciation for print, the print category has remained in a number of national art contests, putting print at par with painting and the other media.

Another good indicator of the increased renown and prestige of print is the show by young artist Janos Delacruz, "Tales from the Big City," which will open tomorrow at 6 p.m. at The Crucible Gallery (4/F, Bldg. A, SM Megamall).

Crucible has been one of the few homes for printmakers in the country, and it is to its credit that it is giving space to and gambling on the works of a relative unknown.

Of course, it is not as if Delacruz was a complete greenhorn. If genes could kill, then Delacruz's art should at least grip and rivet. Janos, after all, is the son of Fil, whose works in print and paint have been one steady development of ever-spiraling vision and ever-deepening craft.

Bright promise

Delacruz personifies the bright promise of printmaking in the Philippines. Barely into adulthood and having just finished Fine Arts at the College of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Santo Tomas, the 20-year-old artist has already won a caché of prizes that should make him one of the young artists to watch out for today.

Even when he was only 13, Delacruz already won the Jurors' Choice prize at the annual Letray y Figuras painting contest of Instituto Cervantes. In 2004, he won the top prize at both the PAP Open Fine Prints and the AAP Annual.

Last year, he won second place in the Digital Art category of the Shell contest. When he graduated last summer, UST gave him the Benavides Award, an award for outstanding students.

His winning works showed that Delacruz's strong suit was his graphic skills and rich imagination. He banked on these skills in his first solo, an exhibit of pen-and-ink drawings. In his new show, he builds on them while returning to the scene of his early success, print.

"I AM Magdalene"

"NINO Mulat"

"BETWEEN Heaven and Earth"

But there's something new, of course. In "Tales from the Big City," Delacruz turns to intaglio, perhaps a deepening process from his early experiments with lithography.

In intaglio, lines are cut into the surface of a plate and it is these lines that are printed. (In contrast, in woodcut, a favorite of Filipino print artists, the spaces between the lines of a design are cut away, leaving the lines raised in relief.)

It is easy to imagine the difficulty of the process, as Delacruz would use one hand to bury his burin or graver into a metal plate to draw the lines and forms, while his other hand would rotate the plate against the burin.

But the labor hardly appears in the final work. In one etching after another, Delacruz shows nearly effortless grace in conjuring images and specters in "Tales from the Big City."

The images are surreal, strange and searing. They seem to represent the wild imaginings of a young man trying to make sense of the city's jagged images and jarring sights and sounds.

What restrains the images from going overboard is the aquatint, which also provides a contrast to Delacruz's obsessive etchings. Like his father's legendary mezzotints, the young Delacruz's works are a symphony of shades and nuances. They achieve a resonance that reaffirms the power of print.

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The Philippines can learn from global charters on conservation

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

THE PHILIPPINES CAN LEARN from the efforts of other cities and countries in the world to save their heritage by coming up with relevant and effective conservation charters.

The Washington Charter on the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (1987) concerns historic urban areas of any size located in cities, towns or historic centers that illustrate traditional culture through its surviving architecture. The scope includes the sites surrounding natural and manmade environments also under severe threat.

The charter defines the principles, objectives and methods for conserving historic towns and urban areas. It promotes harmony of private and community life and encourages preservation of cultural properties, however modest in scale, that constitute the memory of mankind. It presents steps for conserving such towns and areas, suggesting that development harmoniously adapt the old with contemporary life.

The Washington Charter suggests that conservation should form part of economic and social development policies to ensure that the historic character of the town is preserved.

Methods to ensure preservation include retaining the street pattern and maintaining the original relationship between buildings and open spaces.

Existing heritage buildings should be preserved. Keeping the same proportions, construction type and materials, colors and decoration is essential.

Most important, the charter calls for the participation of the local community to ensure the success of the conservation program, since the conservation of historic towns and urban areas primarily concerns its residents.

The charter lists the steps to be taken in preparing and implementing a conservation plan, a multidisciplinary effort since conservation plans address all relevant factors including archaeology, history, architecture, construction techniques, sociology, economics, legal and administrative.

Particularly significant to the Philippine penchant for pseudo-heritage architecture and for blending new with old in historic districts situation is the statement "Introduction of contemporary elements in harmony with the surroundings should not be discouraged since such features can contribute to the enrichment of an area"—provided that old and new respect each other and are good architectural neighbors.

Archeological charter

The Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage of 1990 defines archeological heritage as the basic record of past human activities.

Some archeological heritage are components of architectural structures and, therefore, must be protected in accordance with the criteria in the 1966 Venice Charter.

Other elements of archeological heritage are part of the living traditions of indigenous peoples. Participation of local cultural groups is essential for their protection and preservation.

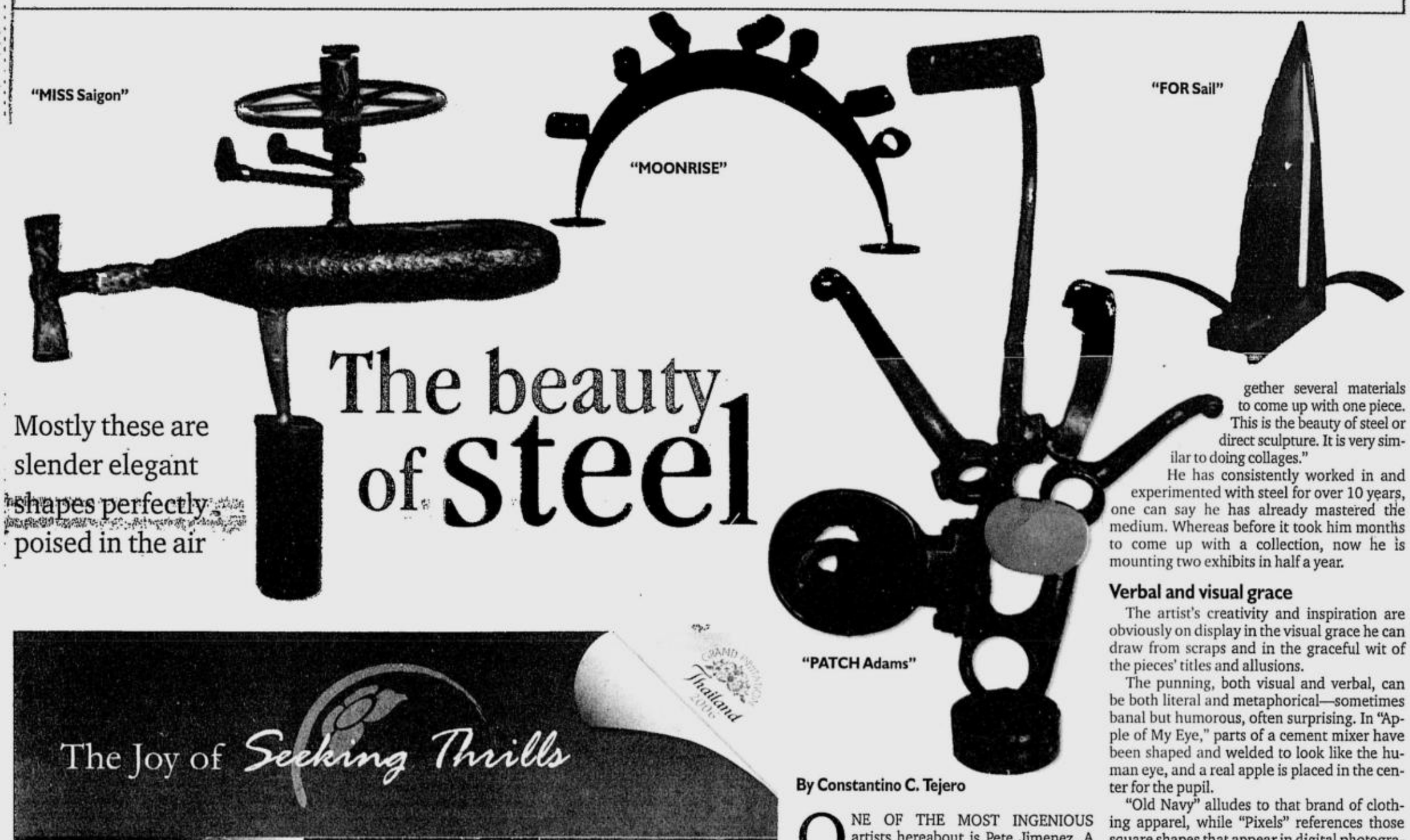
The charter lays down principles regarding different aspects of archeological-heritage management including responsibilities of public authorities and legislators, principles relating to the professional performance of the processes of inventorization, survey, excavation, documentation, research, maintenance, conservation, preservation, reconstruction, information, presentation, public access and use of the heritage, and the qualification of professionals involved in the protection of the archeological heritage.

STEPH BRAVO

Next week, the series on the International Council of Monuments and Sites (Icomos) continues. Icomos information is at www.icomos.org. Icomos charters, resolutions, and declarations are at www.international.icomos.org/centre_documentation/chartes_eng.htm Contact Icomos Philippines at http://icomosphilippines.blogspot.com

The beauty of steel

Mostly these are slender elegant shapes perfectly poised in the air



By Constantino C. Tejero

ONE OF THE MOST INGENIOUS artists hereabout is Pete Jimenez. A champion of direct sculpture inspired by Julio González and Picasso in their expressive use of iron as medium, he has been fashioning steel discards into graceful forms that work as visuals puns.

This artist has a rich lode of creativity, energy and inspiration. Only three months since his previous exhibit and he was already presenting his latest output in "Bakal," recently in Mag:net Gallery at Agcor Building, 335 Katipunan Ave., Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

The prodigious energy can be gleaned from how much Jimenez wields his art in various mediums and excels in each. He is, in fact, not only a sculptor but a multimedia artist.

An alumnus of the UP Artists Circle, he was a regional finalist in the 1998 Art Association of the Philippines National Centennial Painting Competition.

He is also an award-winning TV director, animation artist and graphic designer, garnering the Best in Art Direction and Best in Animation awards for his productions at the 17th Philippine Advertising Congress.

Natural shape and size

A Visual Communications graduate from the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts, Jimenez demonstrates proficiency in visual communication by skillfully manipulating even the humblest objects such as discarded mechanical parts. Each artwork works as a semaphore that the common viewer can readily apprehend.

The artist says he spends long hours working on a piece, spontaneously working on weekends only as he has a weekday job. He admits he picks up his ideas from movies, magazines, books and advertising, to which he is quite exposed, being manager of Optima Digital.

Of his medium and technique, he says: "As much as possible, I don't want to violate their natural shapes and sizes as I first saw them in the junk shops. Most of the time I just weld together several materials to come up with one piece. This is the beauty of steel or direct sculpture. It is very similar to doing collages."

He has consistently worked in and experimented with steel for over 10 years, one can say he has already mastered the medium. Whereas before it took him months to come up with a collection, now he is mounting two exhibits in half a year.

Verbal and visual grace

The artist's creativity and inspiration are obviously on display in the visual grace he can draw from scraps and in the graceful wit of the pieces' titles and allusions.

The punning, both visual and verbal, can be both literal and metaphorical—sometimes banal but humorous, often surprising. In "Apple of My Eye," parts of a cement mixer have been shaped and welded to look like the human eye, and a real apple is placed in the center for the pupil.

"Old Navy" alludes to that brand of clothing apparel, while "Pixels" references those square shapes that appear in digital photography and video display.

"Askal," of course, is shaped like a dog (from the colloquial *asong kalye*, or "stray dog"), while "Pusakal" is cat (*pusang kalye*, or "stray cat").

A funny yet poignant piece that's also a scathing commentary is "Miss Saigon," consisting of what looks like an antique warhead topped by a rusty steering wheel. This evokes the chopper on the rooftop toward the end of the Vietnam War, an iconic image appropriated by the musical "Miss Saigon."

(To push the punning further, we'd swear there's no more apt venue to showcase these metal pieces than Mag:net.)

"SCISSOR-HANDS"

Earthbound yet flighty

The mass of rusty metal may look heavy but these pieces' essential grace and the titles with their associations make them feel buoyant—as contradictory as any in David Smith's metal calligraphy and landscapes.

Take, for example, "Worm's-Eye View," displayed in Jimenez's previous exhibit "My Garage" in West Gallery at SM Megamall. With its density and volume, the bent rod looks positively earthbound, as if about to slip down from its base. Yet with the title, and after a second look, it suddenly feels lightweight.

Mostly these are slender elegant shapes perfectly poised in the air, whether freestanding or wall-bound. Typical is "Same Feather," like Brancusi's metal rendition of a bird about to take wing.

Often it is sheer ingenuity that makes the pieces seem lighter than they really are, as in the graceful vertical thrust and delicate construction of joined metal links in "Typhoon Belt" and "Audio-Video Lock."

Sometimes a piece can appear random, such as "Warp," in which metal plates seem to be haphazardly conjoined. Yet when one looks long and long, it slowly attains a beauty all its own.

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"REFLECTIONS"

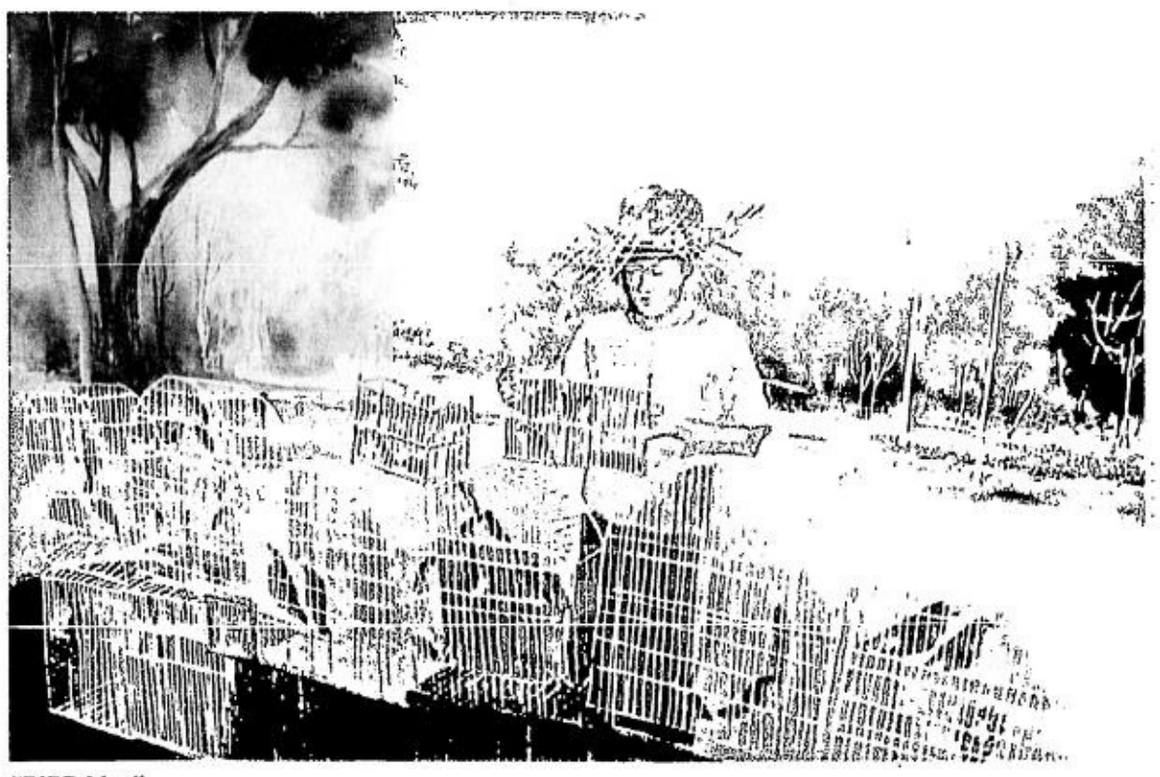
"MORNING Mist"

Cusi's watercolors at Art Exchange

ART EXCHANGE IN GLORIETTA 4, MAKATI, is holding "Reflections," by renowned Mindoro-born watercolorist Rafael "Popoy" Cusi. Cusi was awarded the Premio Ambiente in 2001 by the Centro Estudi Europeo Ambiente Arte Associazione in Milan, Italy. His watercolor pieces consistently awe his followers, his prowess at containing an otherwise unpredictable medium evident as his strokes parlay spontaneity.

Works on view are mostly book pieces from Manuel Duldulao's "Quezon City," published in 1995.

The show runs until July 31. Call 7529089.



"BIRD Man"

Food and Nutrition Experts Reveal Truths About Carbs and Wheat

While rice remains to be the Filipinos' staple food, many have included wheat-based foods like bread, cereals, crackers, pasta, noodles and tortillas as a substitute source of carbohydrates for breakfast and other main meals. Nutritious, convenient and delicious, wheat foods are widely consumed in many parts of the world. Despite recent fad diets that hallmark the leaving out of carbohydrates or grain foods such as rice and wheat, food and nutrition authorities maintain that grains are still the base of healthy eating and lifestyle.

"Contrary to the claims of fad diets, which have attacked carbohydrate-rich foods as the stumbling blocks on the path to good health and physical fitness, carbohydrates are essential nutrients to fuel the brain and body," said the Wheat Foods Council, an institution in the United States, with industry-wide partnerships dedicated to increasing consumption of wheat and other grain foods through nutrition information, education, and promotional and research programs.

Bread and pasta, both wheat flour-based, are the more widely consumed wheat-based foods. There are also non flour-based wheat foods such as bulgur, precooked and cracked into pieces and are commonly used for salads and soups; couscous, which is served as a vegetarian menu item; cracked wheat, which is whole kernel broken into pieces and added to baked goods for a nutty flavor and crunchy texture; wheat germ, which is added to baked goods, casseroles and beverages; whole wheat kernels, or wheat berries that can be grown into wheat sprouts and best for salads and meat dishes; and commercial cereals that can be eaten for breakfast or snacks, or added to baked products.

Wheat is primarily made up of complex carbohydrates that provide a source of time-released energy. The Wheat Foods Council in the United States recommends that 55 to 65 percent of an individual's daily calories come from carbohydrates, or the grain foods category. However, the consumption of grain products should be proportional to one's age, gender and physical activities. Moreover, it is recommended that one consume no more than 35 percent of calories from fats and approximately 12 to 15 percent of calories from protein. Nutritionists reveal actual nutritional benefits from eating "carbs" and wheat.

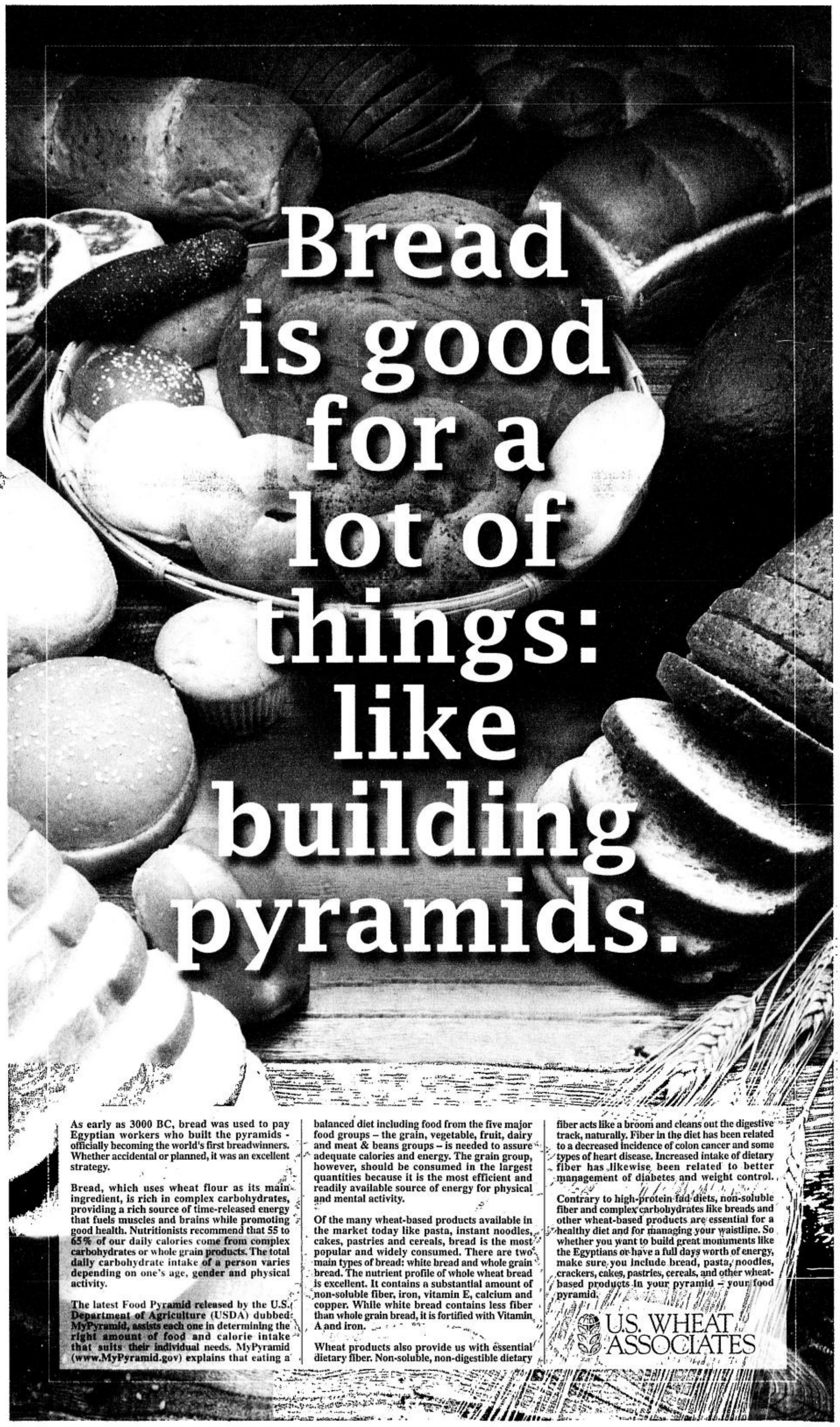
First of all, the brain and central nervous system (CNS) get fuel from carbohydrates or from the breakdown of lean body mass. Carbohydrates are needed to burn fat. Without enough carbohydrate intake, the body will use lean tissue for energy.

Wheat products also provide dietary fiber in our diets. Dietary fiber is the carbohydrates in foods, which humans cannot digest but rather use as "broom" to flush out toxins from the body. Adequate intake of foods containing fiber has been related to a decrease in the incidence of colon cancer and some types of heart disease. In addition, fiber has been related to aid in diabetes management and weight control. In 1999, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the health claim for whole grain products after 50 scientific studies supported the link between a diet rich in whole grain and the reduced risk of heart disease and certain cancers.

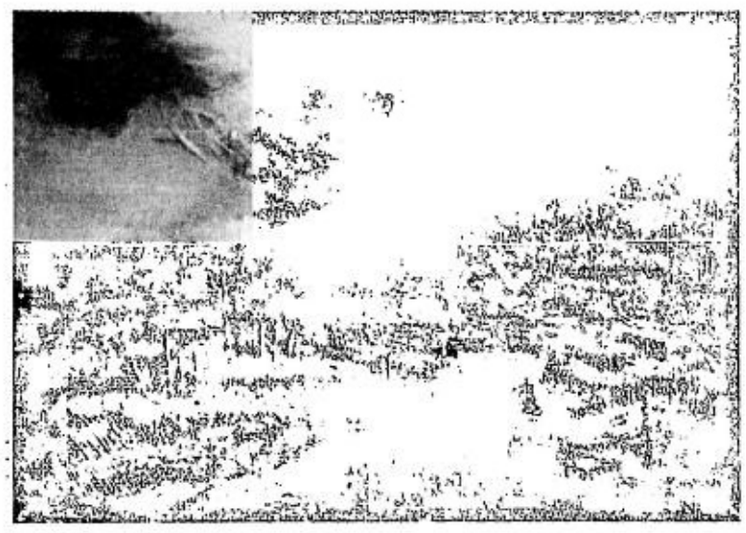
Combining wheat with animal proteins or legumes also makes the grain protein complete. Other vitamins and minerals derived from wheat foods are *thiamine*, an essential B-vitamin needed daily for good appetite, digestion and healthy nerves; *niacin*, a vitamin essential for the efficient use of protein by the body; iron, which is vital to nutrition; *zinc*, important for skin healing and growth properties; *riboflavin*, which is essential for growth and good vision; and trace minerals like *selenium and magnesium*, nutrients that are essential to good health.

Grain foods like wheat ought to be a vital part of a healthy lifestyle because they provide vitamins, minerals and energy-producing carbohydrates. Wheat-based foods provide an excellent solution to those who are searching for healthful and convenient food options to help boost and maintain energy levels. With the backing of food and nutrition experts, it has been proven that a diet rich in grain-based foods is important to ensure optimal health and well-being.

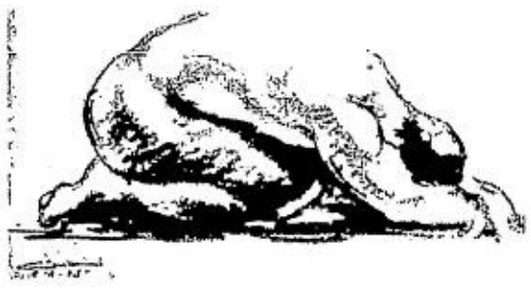
ADVT



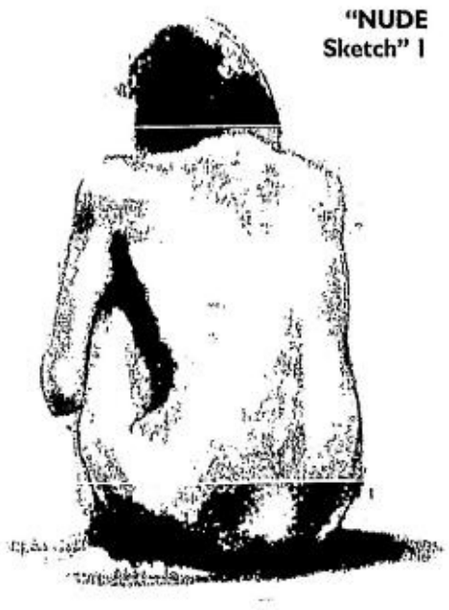
Camille de la Rosa turns to abstracts



"ABSTRACT" I



"NUDE Sketch" 2



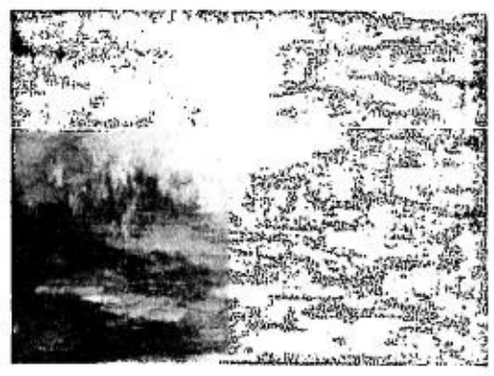
"NUDE Sketch" I

YOUNG ARTIST CAMILLE DE LA ROSA shows her versatility in "Diversity," which opens on July 26, 5 p.m. at Le Soufflé, The Fort, Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila.

For the new show, De la Rosa displays her first abstract works. Also on view are floral and landscape paintings together with nude sketches which were done on the spot at The Crucible.

The young artist celebrates her birthday with this show, saying she has discovered "her own identity, themes, colors and expression."

Call 8875108-09 for details.



"ABSTRACT" 2

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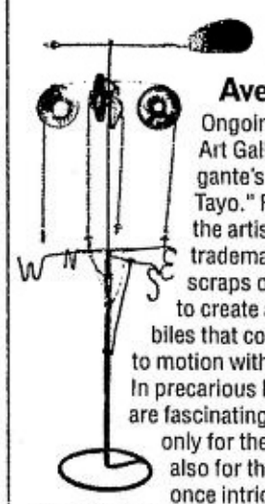


Arrogante at Avellana

Ongoing at the Avellana Art Gallery is Ral Arrogante's "Paikot-ikot Lang Tayo." For this show, the artist has utilized his trademark discarded scraps of brass and copper to create an assembly of mobiles that could be propelled into motion with the littlest touch. In precarious balance, the works are fascinating and whimsical not only for their kinetic feat but also for their design that is at once intricate and mathematical. Avellana Art Gallery is located at A-19, 2680 F.B. Harrison St., Pasay City (fronting Gideon Academy). Call 8338357.

Quirante at Boston

Cagayan artist Ian Quirante presents his fourth one-man show, "Memorabilia," until Aug. 9 at Boston Gallery, 72 Boston St., Cubao, QC. It features a collection of works on canvas and paper from Quirante's current series of automatic drawings. Call 7229205.

"MEMORABILIA"

Eghai Roxas at Likha Diwa

"VIENNA Diary" I

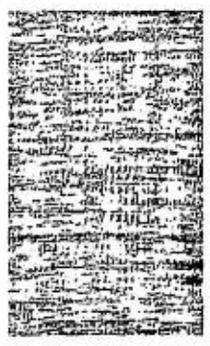
Eghai Roxas presents his latest exhibit of abstract paintings, "Evanescence," July 25-Aug. 25, at Likha Diwa, Lt. J. Francisco St., Kruz na Ligas, Diliman, QC. The exhibit features "takeoffs" of the artist's experiences while sketching the landscape in Vienna, Austria, during his 2005 visit. Call 9255522.

Villaruel at Finale

On view at Finale Art Gallery (4/F SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong City) is Alvin Villaruel's "Space – Time." Awed and deeply interested with celestial and meteorological phenomena, the artist faithfully renders anything from the bands of Saturn to solar flares, approximating their grandeur with conflagrative, but disciplined, strokes. Painted in muted tones, the works downscale the cosmic drama into illumined, irresistible fields of rapt imagining. "Space – Time" runs until Aug. 8. Call 6342411.

De Guzman at Joaquin

Hong Kong-based artist Noel de Guzman presents his seventh solo exhibit, "Color Caprice," July 27-Aug. 10 at Center Gallery of Galerie Joaquin, 371 P. Guevarra St. and Montessori Lane, Addition Hills, San Juan, Metro Manila. The exhibit features 21 multicolored abstractions. The title refers to the philosophy of the artist who paints by hand. He believes that the sense of touch is a compellingly powerful and extraordinary way of experiencing painting. Call 7239253/9418.



"FAR Eastern Time"

Larrios at One Workshop

"LANDSCAPE"

Photographer Richard Larrios presents "Infrared Landscapes," Aug. 2-16 at One Workshop Gallery, G/F 2241 La Fuerza Plaza II, Don Chino Roces Ave. and Sabio St., Makati. Larrios presents works taken in different locales in the Philippines that possess a strong Zen quality—a perfect balance of yin and yang. Call 8105094 or 8192074.

Sena art workshops

Fernando B. Sena holds art lessons on drawing and painting starting July 29 at the following venues: Philippine Medical Women's Association, V. Luna Road and Malakas St., Quezon City (Saturday); UP Vargas Museum, UP Diliman, QC (Wednesday); Triumph Bldg., Quezon Avenue, QC (Thursday); and 22 Guevarra and Zamora Sts., Barangay Paltok, SFDM, QC (Sunday). Call 3762196/2337 and 0918-9519989.

"FIGURA," art exhibit is on view until July 31, at the Art Asia Gallery, 4/F SM Megamall, Bldg. A, Mandaluyong. Featured artists include Malang, Al Perez, Fil Delacruz, Julius Limpe, Fernando Sena, among others.

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SCENE from Alfonso Dacanay's "First Snow of November," directed by Herbie Go and PHSA's Dulaang Sipat Lawin

The untried, untested, unstaged plays of the recent Virgin Labfest 2 were also unsentimental and uninhibited

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Virginal, but also madcap and magical

By Gibbs Cadiz

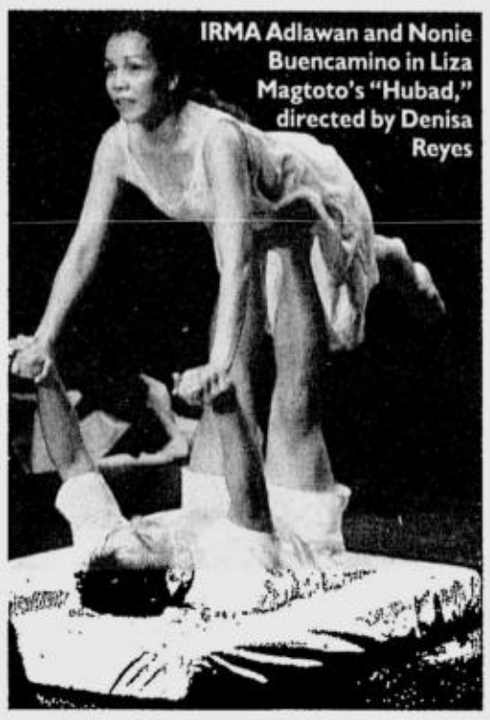
WHEN TWO THEATER pros at the peak of their powers join forces for the first time in their much-garlanded careers, the resulting wild ovation would be entirely apropos, and not nearly enough.

And so it was two weekends ago, when Nonie Buencamino and Irma Adlawan came together for the first time in Liza Magtoto's play, "Hubad." The play was the final entry in Virgin Labfest 2, a modest festival of some 15 untried, untested and unstaged dramatic works by the Writers' Bloc, a loose group of emerging and established Filipino playwrights.

Mounted at the CCP's Tanghalang Huseng Batute, "Hubad" saw Adlawan and Buencamino fearlessly playing a husband and wife who've taken to playing sexual games to spice up their marriage. The two actors were a wonder to watch—nothing less than master classes on the use of body, voice, mind and experience to create tactile characters onstage.

Magtoto's play featured strong humor and a bracing, penetrating honesty. This could only have been written by a woman deeply in touch with her own powerful sense of self and sexuality.

And as staged by another woman, Denisa Reyes, the former artistic director of Ballet Philippines who was making her directorial debut in theater, "Hubad" exuded a ripe, zesty maturity which made it the perfect vehicle to cap this year's edition of Virgin Labfest.



IRMA Adlawan and Nonie Buencamino in Liza Magtoto's "Hubad," directed by Denisa Reyes

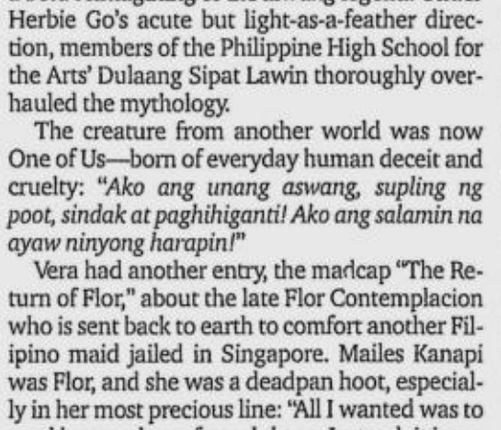
Bold reimagining

A similar sensuousness, but of a dark, gothic kind, marked Rody Vera's "Ang Unang Aswang," a bold reimagining of the *aswang* legend. Under Herbie Go's acute but light-as-a-feather direction, members of the Philippine High School for the Arts' Dulaang Sipat Lawin thoroughly overhauled the mythology.

The creature from another world was now One of Us—born of everyday human deceit and cruelty: "*Ako ang unang aswang, supling ng poot, sindak at paghihiganti! Ako ang salamin na ayaw ninyong harapin!*"

Vera had another entry, the madcap "The Return of Flor," about the late Flor Contemplacion who is sent back to earth to comfort another Filipino maid jailed in Singapore. Mailes Kanapi was Flor, and she was a deadpan hoot, especially in her most precious line: "All I wanted was to send home a box of *pasalubong*. Instead, it is me they bring home in a box."

Alfonso Dacanay's "First Snow of November," adapted from Bienvenido Santos' "The Day the Dancers Came," limned the loneliness of exile with exquisite feeling. More wondrously, the play was also performed (and co-directed, with Go) by PHSA's Dulaang Sipat Lawin—high-school students whose emotional transparency could give older actors a run for their money.



ROSELYN Loria and Amihan Ruiz in Rody Vera's "Ang Unang Aswang," staged by Herbie Go and PHSA's Dulaang Sipat Lawin

Abner Delina Jr., all of 16, essayed the role of Filemon Acayan, the aging Pinoy expat in a Chicago nursing home who remembers the US visit of a Bayanihan-like dance troupe 20 years ago. Elegiac and autumnal, "First Snow of November" played like a heartfelt, bittersweet note on a violin. Among "Labfest's" entries, it cut the deepest.

Preachy, shopworn

Rather expectedly, the "message" plays, those that were baldly engaged in social issues, tended to be preachy, shopworn or unsubtle.

Go and Sipat Lawin's one weak entry was "Pragres," based on F. Sionil José's short story "Progress," about a naïve provincial clerk chasing a promotion through a rotten government bureaucracy. It was vibrantly performed, but by verbalizing its point—"*Ganito ang pragres nung panahon ng* New Society *ni* Marcos. *Ngayon, me nagbago ba*?"—it overstated the obvious.

Rene Villanueva's "Isang Dakilang Mamamayan ng Republika," directed by Regina Anne Ronquillo, also treaded a well-worn path—poverty as the trigger for shocking acts of desperation. Villanueva's lines were lyrical—"*Malapit man ang* Quiapo, *napakalayo naman ng langit para sa aming nga daing*"—but the dazed, rambling quality of the play was a drag.

In Layeta Bucoy's interesting but heavy-handed "Ang Anak ni Gloria," directed by Tess Jamias, a hooker kills her child in exchange for a promised security, as Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's State of the Nation Address in the background lends a big allegorical note to the story.

The over-mannered touches came in the form of bizarre, marionette-like movements that the two actors, May Bayot and Mayen Estanero, performed at odd moments, coupled with what sounded like passages from Euripides' "Medea" that sporadically bubbled out of their mouths, alternating with the piquant Filipino dialogue.

Rogelio Braga's "Maganda Pa ang Daigdig" could use more of this sort of over-execution. Its premise was startling enough—a family of pro-Erap loyalists railing against the hypocrisy of Edsa II, and conspiring to hide a murder by using the ongoing tumult as diversion. But this would-be black comedy, directed by George de Jesus III, never managed to rise to a truly absurd level, its contrasting surreal and naturalistic scenes blurring into one nervous, fuzzy brew.

Perils of yearning

Four plays—Niel de Mesa's "Pag-Uwi, Pag-Undas," Debbie Ann Tan's "Dragon's Breath," Argel Tuason's "Palabas/Exit" and Job Pagsibigan's "The Palanca in My Mind"—tackled

VIRGINAL/ D4

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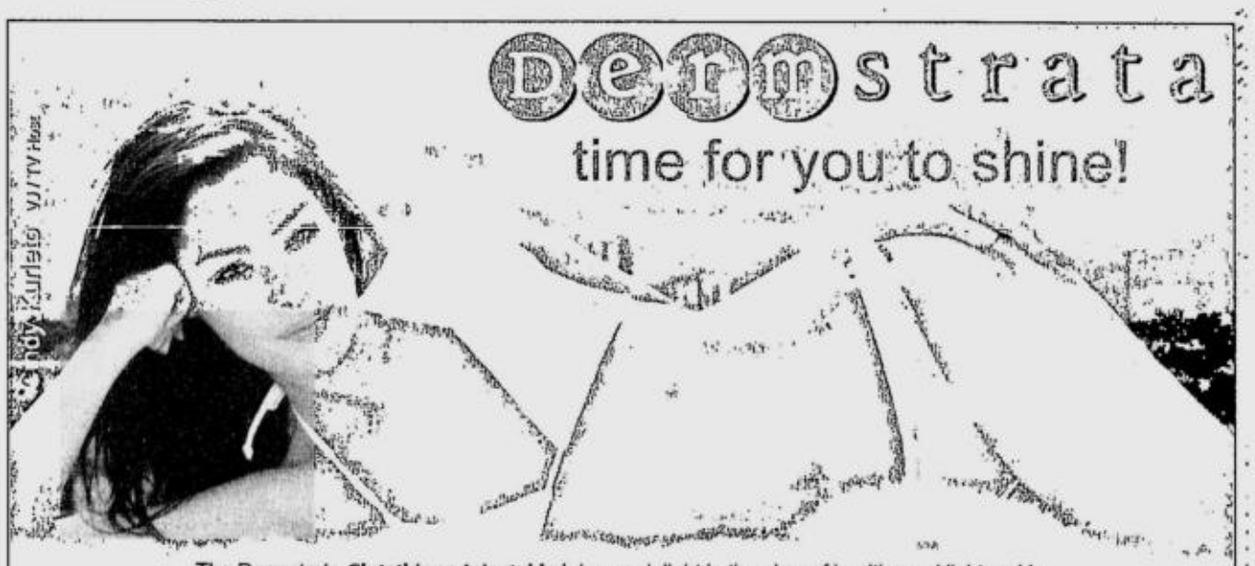

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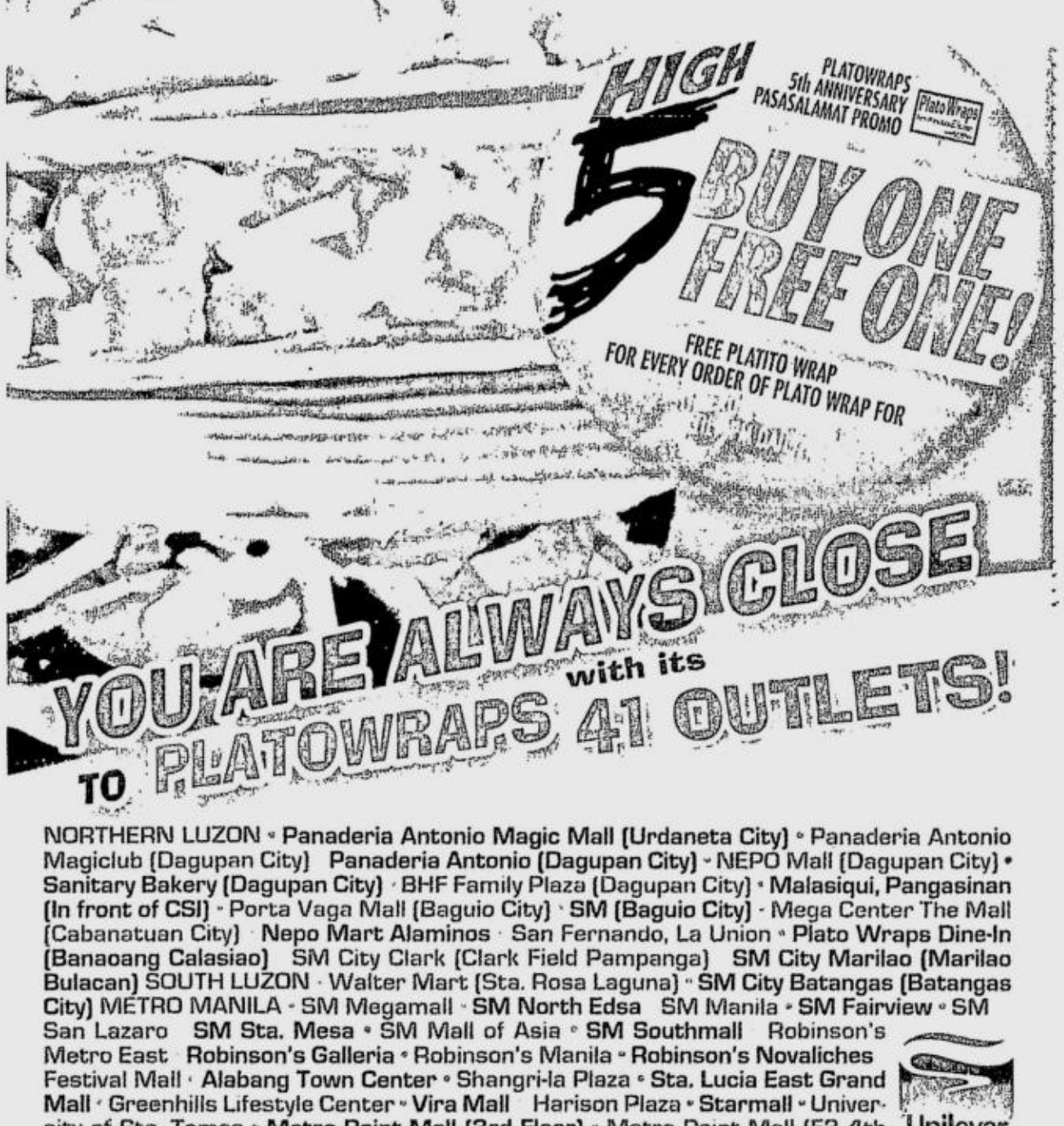

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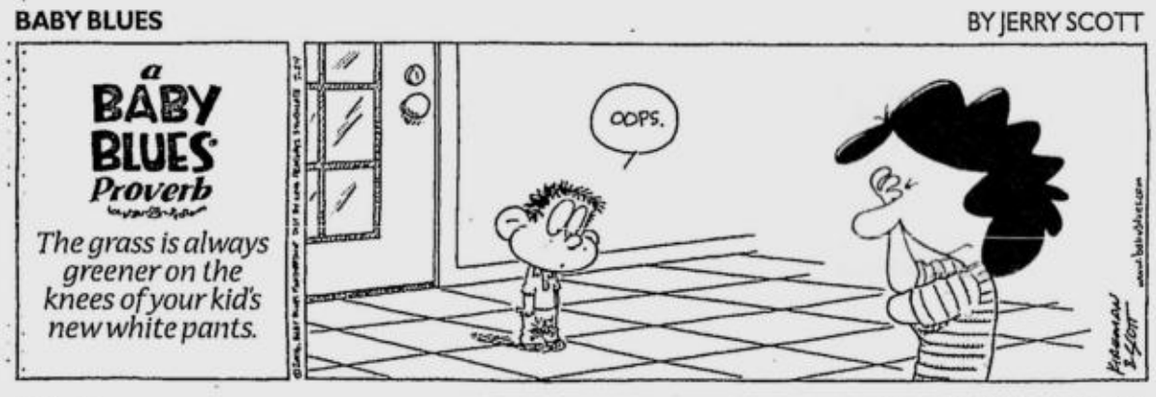


PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA

MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

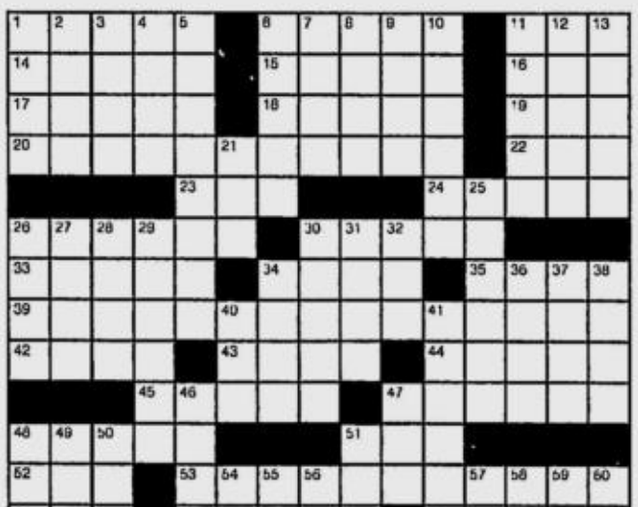
TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Pipe down!
6 Laugh-track sounds
11 Distress signal
14 Too soon
15 In the crow's-nest
16 Raucous bird call
17 Racing sleds
18 African equine
19 Put to a purpose
20 Escaped
22 Quilting get-together
23 Sushi delicacy
24 Very minimum
26 Teeming
30 Au revoir!
33 Home for the Dolphins
34 Kick off
35 Perform again
39 Took flight
42 Oracle's sign
43 Banjo player Scruggs
44 Pictures of illusion
45 Waste time
47 Magician's exclamation
48 Place for a watch
51 Link for a shaft
52 Gun it in neutral
53 Ran off
61 In the past
62 Furnish with funds
63 __ Island
64 Golf norm
65 Awful smell
66 Himalayan country
67 Stallone, to friends
68 Barbecue utensils
69 Hostile force

DOWN
1 Braggart's concern
2 Pull along
3 Reckless yearning
4 Passel
5 Frenzy
6 Eye shade
7 Actor Baldwin
8 Vagabond
9 Bushy 'do
10 Paper fastener
11 Snorkel alternative
12 Desert havens
13 Sugary
21 Haw's partner
25 Asia's neighbor
26 Arsenal stash
27 "The King and I" setting
28 Walk in the shallows
29 Restitution
30 Imitative behavior
31 Start a card game
32 Squid's squirt
34 Evangelist Roberts
36 Periods
37 Soil
38 Bismarck or Preminger
40 __ Paese cheese
41 Held in check
46 Bear witness
47 Seal baby
48 Coats and cloaks
49 Majestic
50 Soap brand
51 War advocates
54 Aware of
55 Valhalla bigwig
56 "King __"
57 __ will you ever learn!
58 Latest info
59 Dutch cheese
60 Depend (on)



By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD
7/24/06

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

R	E	S	I	S	T	E	D	■	S	T	A	B	L	E
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E	Y	E	I	N	G	■	N	A	P	■	D	E	N	T
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T	O	Y	S	■	S	A	O	■	F	E	E	N	E	Y
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S	T	E	E	R	S	■	E	R	E	C	T	O	R	S

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7/24/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're bold and daring—sometimes to the point that you shock people. You're attracted to adventure and unstable situations. You like to appear avant-garde and cutting-edge. Your privacy is important to you, even within your family dynamic. Big changes often take place in your life. You might have to make an important decision this year. Choose wisely.
Birthdate of: Jennifer Lopez, singer/actress; Amelia Earhart, aviatrix; John D. MacDonald, mystery writer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Today's New Moon is the perfect opportunity to examine how much playtime and arts-and-crafts time you're giving yourself. These are important activities for an Aries.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): What can you do to improve your home and your relationships with family members? This is a good question to ask today because it's the New Moon—a time for new resolutions.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Decide to be extra-clear in all your communications with others. Make sure this applies particularly to your relationships with siblings and relatives.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You've been pondering important purchases and your cash flow for some time. Give serious thought to what you really want to do with the money that is available to you. (Write it down.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is the only New Moon in your sign all year. That makes this the perfect opportunity to see how to improve your closest relationships. You can also improve your appearance.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Make a serious assessment of your possessions. What do you really need to keep? What can you pass on, sell or give away? De-clutter your life.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Are you happy with the friends you have? Do you hang out with quality people? Of course, the secret to having friends is simple: Be friendly.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Take a moment to examine the reputation you have among your peers. Is there something you can do to create more respect for yourself?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Think about increased training or further education that could improve your job or your quality of life. Similarly, is there some way you can travel anywhere?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a good time to analyze your financial assets. Add up your bills and whatever you owe anyone. Get a good, hard look at the picture. Information is empowering.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Study your partnerships and closest relationships. For a relationship to be successful, you must be as good for your partner as he or she is for you.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): What can you do to improve your job, or how you do your work, or your health in general? Today's New Moon is the perfect time to think about these things.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

	1		8		2			
	8	6		3			5	7
				1			9	
6								8
	2	3	7	4	1	9	6	
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5	7			6		3	2	
			1		5		7	

Difficulty Level ★ 7/24

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

5	6	2	9	8	1	4	3	7
4	8	7	3	2	6	5	9	1
1	3	9	5	4	7	2	6	8
2	5	8	7	3	4	6	1	9
3	1	6	8	9	2	7	4	5
7	9	4	6	1	5	3	8	2
6	2	1	4	5	8	9	7	3
8	7	3	2	6	9	1	5	4
9	4	5	1	7	3	8	2	6

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 7/21

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Eugenia Apostol talk at Lopez Museum

RESPECTED JOURNALIST AND INQUIRER founding publisher Eugenia "Eggie" Apostol will talk about her experience as the most influential newspaper publisher of the past three decades and a tireless advocate for press freedom on July 29, 2 p.m., at the Lopez Memorial Museum.

Apostol is one of the pioneers who wielded the power of print media and inspired women from all walks of life.

During the Marcos regime, she published reports that could not come out in the Marcos-controlled media by establishing the best-selling Mr. & Ms. Special Edition that printed uncensored follow-up stories on the 1983 Aquino assassination.

She founded the INQUIRER in 1985. In 1999, in reaction to President Joseph Estrada's attempts to clamp down on the press, she put out Pinoy Times.

Apostol graduated magna cum laude with the degree Bachelor of Literature in Journalism from the University of Santo Tomas. She was the first recipient of the Gawad Plaridel for the media by the UP College of Mass Communication.

"WomanTalk with Apostol" complements the exhibition, "Babble, Bauble: Tweaking Femme," which is ongoing until Sept. 15.

The lecture and a tour of the exhibition are included in the P120 fee.

The Lopez Memorial Museum is on the ground floor, Benpres Building, Exchange Road and Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.

The museum is open, Monday-Saturday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., except holidays. Call 6312417 or e-mail pezseum@skyinet.net.

Festschrift to Cirilo Bautista

CIRILO Bautista

"BELIEVE AND BETRAY: New and Collected Poems by Cirilo F. Bautista" will be launched on July 29. The book is a festschrift edited by poet-teacher Marjorie Evasco in honor of Bautista as a poet, fictionist, essayist, critic, journalist, and pedagogue par excellence.

Hosted by De La Salle University's Department of Literature, Bienvenido N. Santos Creative Writing Center, Linguistics Office, and DLSU Press, the launching will be held at the Marilen Gaerlan Conservatory of DLSU-Manila, 10 a.m.

Bautista is author of several books, including "The Cave and Other Poems" (1968), "Charts" (poetry, 1973), "Sugat ng Salita" (poetry, 1986), "Stories" (1990), "Boneyard Breaking: New Collected Poems" (1992), "Kirot ng Kataga" (poetry, 1995), "Words and Battlefield: A Theoria on the Poem" (1998), "The Trilogy of Saint Lazarus" (epic, 2001; comprising The Archipelago, Telex Moon, and Sunlight on Broken Stones), "Bullets and Roses: The Poetry of Amado V. Hernandez" (2003), and "Galaw ng Asoge" (novel, 2004).

Bautista is a recipient of many awards and fellowships, including the Palanca Hall of Fame Award, Gawad Manuel L. Quezon, Gawad Balagtas, National Book Awards, Knight Commander of Rizal, Centennial Literary Award, Parangal Patnubay ng Sining at Kalinangan and Gawad Gatpuno Antonio Villegas from the City of Manila, honorary fellowship in creative writing from the State University of Iowa, visiting writer fellowship from Cambridge University in England, exchange professorship in Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan, and exchange professorship in Ohio University in Ohio, USA.

Bautista is Professor Emeritus of Literature and University Fellow of DLSU-Manila. He is a member of the Manila Critics Circle, Philippine Writers Academy, and Philippine Literary Arts Council.

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- **Adela Hipolito**, a 46-year old businesswoman and Pynocare user for 8 weeks

"I've been using Pynocare for a month now and I am very satisfied with the results. The changes I have seen on my face have convinced me to continue using Pynocare."
- **Rosanna Ocampo**, a 46-year old housewife, Pynocare user for 4 weeks

"I play golf a lot and I've been suffering from "pekas" for 5 years now, as a result of excessive sun exposure. I tried topical creams but struggled with the recurring condition and felt that it was a waste of money. Now that I am using Pynocare, I am satisfied with the lightening and reduction."
- **Joyce Fukuda**, a 44-year old golfer, Pynocare user for 4 weeks

"I have had melasma for the last five years as a result of excessive use of astringents and direct exposure to the sun. Since I started using Pynocare, I've noticed my cheeks have cleared up considerably. People around me have started noticing it too."
- **Adela Pasicolan**, a 34-year old Assistant Branch Manager, Pynocare user for 3 months

"In the insurance business, the field work makes me vulnerable to prolonged sun exposure. I tried Pynocare after seeing its skin analysis booth display in SM City Cebu. In as early as 2 weeks, I noticed that my pekas started to lighten. Pynocare truly brought back the glow on my skin. Many of my friends are glad that I tried this amazing product because they see the beautiful result on my skin."
- **Bernadette Suarez**, 47-year-old Insurance Agent, Pynocare user for 5 months

"Pregnancy caused my "pekas" and struggling with the condition for 7 years led me to try all sorts of treatment. I used creams, astringents and went to a dermatologist for skin-peeling sessions. But only Pynocare effectively treated the "pekas" on my face. I am very satisfied and will continue to use the product for its benefits.
- **Ella Bidal**, 33-year-old businesswoman and Pynocare user for 4 months

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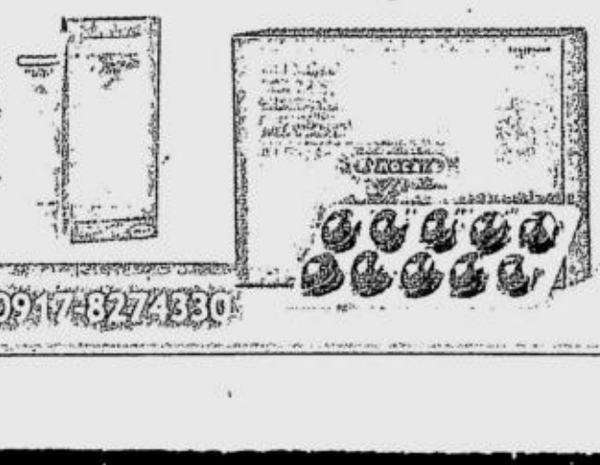

For more information on Pynocare 40 Actisome, please call HOTLINE 89[illegible] EXTLINE 09[illegible]

National Children's Book Day a blast

By Neni Sta. Romana Cruz
Contributor

IN ADOPTING THE THEME, "May Tinig ang Libro, Magbasa, Makinig," for the 23rd National Children's Book Day (NCBD) on July 18, the Philippine Board on Books for Young People (PBBY) sought to dramatize the wonderful voices in literature. This was reflected in Salaysayan 2006, a storytelling contest for adults organized by PBBY and Alitaptap Storytellers Philippines.

The contestants underwent a workshop before the book-based storytelling competition. They were encouraged to tell stories from recently published materials, not standard fare or favorites. Thus, participants and the public were introduced to new titles by Filipino authors.

PBBY chair and Alitaptap pioneer Manolo Silayan oversaw the competition which drew finalists from Metro Manila, Laguna and Batangas. Most of the finalists were school teachers, with the rest coming from advertising and radio.

Silayan's storytelling approach demands that a book be held in hand and that the techniques of drama should not detract from the storyline.

This is only the second time PBBY has sponsored a national storytelling competition. It was made possible with help of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts. National Book Store, RCBC, Growers, Netopia and the Vibal, Hiyas and Anvil publishing houses.

A special feature of the celebration at the National Library July 18 was a storytelling treat from the first-prize winners in Filipino and English: Jeralyn Develos, who read "Limang Lola sa Barko"; and Charlyn Chua, who read "Big Eyes, Small Eyes." Both stories are by former advertising executive Grace D. Chong and published by Hiyas Books.

Another attempt to make books come alive was a song from the musical drama version of the 1998 PBBY-Salanga Prize winner by Carla M. Pacis, "Mayroon Akong Alagang Puno." The lyrics in English were written by Pacis; the music composed by Rinky. The song was sung by grade-schoolers Anne Nayve and Sam Turingan of St. Scholastica's College.

Smart Communications, Inc. provided assistance.

Library hubs

This year's guest speaker was former Education Usec. Juan Miguel Luz, who conceptualized the idea of Library Hubs all over the country to make books accessible to public schools. The first Library Hubs in Naga and Davao opened late last year, and many more will soon open.

Luz said the movement would invite corporate and individual donors who would be dubbed, Friends of the Hub or Lord of the Hub. Big donors could have the hubs named after them.

> The National Library has opened a Children's section, the newest hub for reading and literacy

Begging off as a storyteller, Luz nonetheless spoke of his love of reading. He described how his teacher led him to the world of books when he was a sixth-grade student in Canada in 1969. He continues to carry wonderful memories of the teacher who read aloud to the class every single day.

Luz said a book he particularly cherished was "My Family and Other Animals," by Gerald Durrell, brother of novelist Lawrence Durrell. He read excerpts from the book, the new copy of which was a present given him by his children.

The PBBY gave special citations to groups that had embarked on similar literacy campaigns.

Globaltronics was cited for having publicized the readings and other NCBD activities on its electronic display boards.

The citation, written by RayVi Sunico, read: "The sight of light-emitting diodes... shows that new technologies and the centuries-old invention of print and storytelling can mesh and meet to help and inform a growing nation and that both book and screen depend, for their success, on a population that reads."

The Batang-Sining program of the CCP Literary Arts Division also received a citation for promoting the arts among children through annual summer workshops on creative writing, book-making and storytelling.

Also cited was 702 dzAS Agapay ng Sambayanan of the Far East Broadcasting Company Philippines for the weekly radio show "Wan Dey, Isang Araw," hosted by award-winning children's author and PBBY member Luis Gatmaitan.

A partnership with Alitaptap Storytellers Philippines and the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the program features storytelling sessions using children's books by local authors.

Former education officer-in-charge Fe Hidalgo had issued a circular to all elementary schools to celebrate NCBD. Attractive posters echoing the stark simplicity of Japanese poster art and designed by Pepper Roxas were distributed to schools nationwide.

Meanwhile, the jurors in the annual PBBY-Salanga storywriting contest did not award the top prize. But citations were awarded to Ian Casocot, Marielle Nadal and J. Dennis Teodisio. The PBBY Alcala Prize went to illustrators Toni Espiritu-Santo and José Miguel Tejido.

The celebration culminated in the opening of the Children's Library of the National Library, the brainchild of National Library director Prudenciana Cruz and librarian Fe Abelardo.

The usual library fees are waived for children and adults using the children's reading room. Since it is now the home of Alitaptap, the library-section should attract families and other readers.

The author is a member of the Philippine Board on Books for Young People, call 3723548 or visit pbby@adarna.com.ph. E-mail the author at nenisrc@gmail.com

SAM Turingan and Anne Nayve sing an excerpt from a musical play based on a PBBY Salanga Prize winner by Carla M. Pacis, "Mayroon Akong Alagang Puno."

PBBY members in attendance: (seated) Neni Sta. Romana Cruz, RayVi Sunico, director Prudenciana Cruz, Mike Luz, Emily Abrera. (Standing) Totet de Jesus, Zarah Gagatiga, Hermie Beltran, Luis Gatmaitan, Nanding Josef, Nina Lim Yuson, Karina Bolasco, Sally Labanda, PBBY secretary general Ani Almari

Postcolonial lecture in UST

FILIPINO-AMERICAN SCHOLAR Nerissa Balce will deliver a lecture on postcolonialism July 27, 3:30 p.m., at the lecture hall of the Central Library of the University of Santo Tomas, España, Manila.

Balce is assistant professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Her talk, "The Filipina's Breast: Colonial Desire and the Imperial Imagination," is part of a series of lectures by Filipino expatriate writers and scholars, which started last summer with talks by R. Zamora Linmark and Marianne Villanueva.

The series is organized by the Varsitarian, official student paper of UST, UST Literary Society, Department of Languages and Department of Humanities, with assistance from the Graduate School and Central Library.

The lecture is open to the public.

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Virginal, but also madcap and magical

From page D1

shades of hope and yearning.

Tuxs Rutaquio's expressionistic direction of "Pag-Uwi, Pag-Undas" amplified an essentially flimsy tale about lost souls pining for remembrance by loved ones in the living realm.

"Palabas/Exit," meanwhile, under Rolando Inocencio's direction, traced a similar search for connection, this time between two young gay men whose counterpoint dialogues hardly met, just swerving off each other until the desolate end.

Pagsibigan's "The Palanca in My Mind," directed with mock-Brechtian flair by Roobak Valle, offered a diverting (if sitcom-ish) stab at the stuffed, geriatric image of the Palanca Awards, the country's premier literary competition. Here, a ditzy call-center agent goes through all sorts of humiliations to realize her dream of joining the awards.

Wenah Nagales virtually gobbled up the scenery as the starry-eyed writer Dory, supported by a shape-shifting cast of talented Tanghalang Pilipino actors.

In "Dragon's Breath," staged like a tone poem by J. Victor Villareal, a Chinese woman (Marjorie Ann Lorico) loses half her eyesight, but her hopelessness is checked by a blind man (Peter Chua) whose epigrammatic words—"Listen not with your ears but with your soul"—allows her to seek solace from her Chinese heritage and identity.

Noted playwright Nicolas Pichay's contribution to "Labfest" was "Tres Ataques de Corazon," three monologues ruminating on the unhindered nature of love and the human heart, all inspired by his recent coronary bypass surgery and directed by Vincent de Jesus.

The second vignette was the funniest, with Ariel Diccion having a ball as a voluble gay man surrendering to "*pag-ibig, amore, l'amour, luv.*" But the most substantial was the third, about a Pinoy Everyman (a terrific Eric Bisa) who would employ every trick in the book, including using a loved one's death for blackmail, to wangle a US visa.

"*Sa lupain ng* milk and honey, 'f-k you' *ang tunog ng doorbell*," he said. But there he was, reduced to happy tears with his wish granted.

Pronounced humanism

Finally, there is J. Dennis Teodosio, whose "Payb/Siks" and "Baka Sakali" deserve special mention.

Last year's "Geegee at Waterina," while flabby in places, showed off Teodosio as a playwright of pronounced yet unsentimental humanism. His two new plays are a pleasing confirmation of this gift.

The witty, disarmingly simple "Payb/Six" had actors Jake Macapagal and Arnold Reyes discussing sex-for-money as a playful business transaction. The casualness of their repartee, the unforced allusions to the real world (specifically, the country's prostituted state as a debtor nation), and Phil Noble's even-tempered staging took the wind out of any easy moralizing on these proceedings.

In "Baka Sakali," directed by Catherine Racsag, a poor boy and his grandfather (Joel Garcia and Bodjie Pascua) argue over the meaning of fortune and chance, as the old man prepares for yet another crack at a TV game show. Their dreams end in tragedy, but not before Teodosio has very skillfully sketched two more shabby but sturdy characters hoping for a break.

"Baka Sakali" is the first piece of theater we know to comment on the Ultra "Wowowee" tragedy, but it did so in an oblique, almost respectful way.

Obviously, emotionalism wasn't Teodosio's point. Rather, the play's plainspoken language, fleshed out by the winsome acting of Garcia and Pascua, gave every indication of interior lives richly imagined. As with the best of this year's Virgin Labfest 2, "Baka Sakali" was a play that rang true.

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph

JOB Pagsibigan's "The Palanca in My Mind," staged by Roobak Valle

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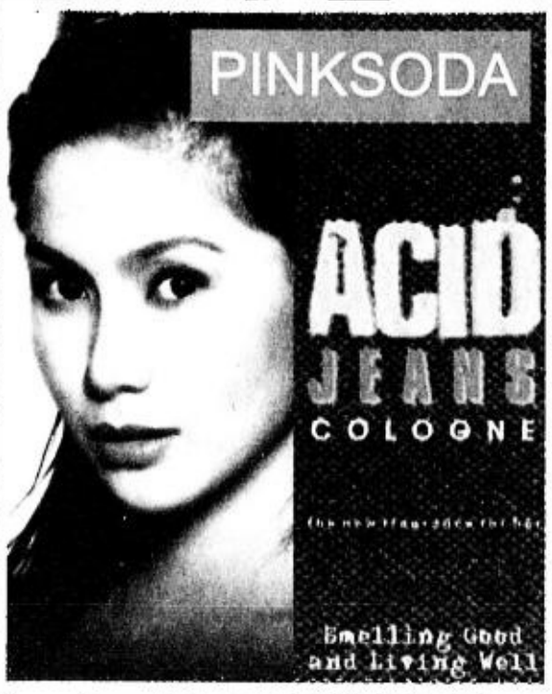

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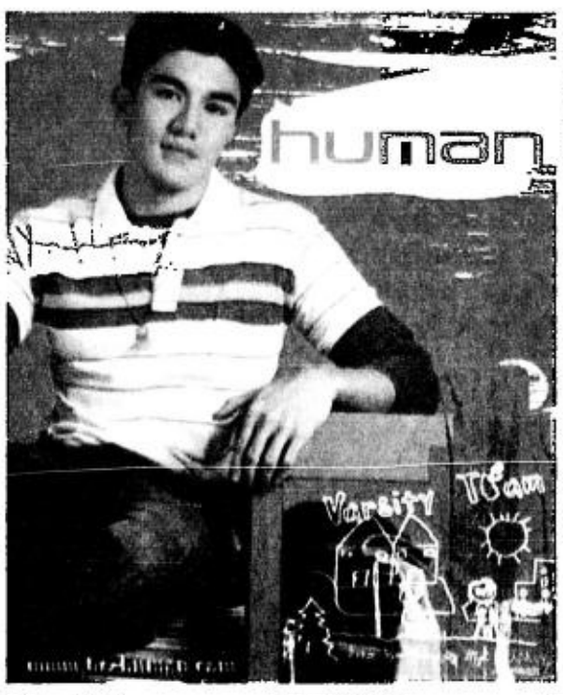

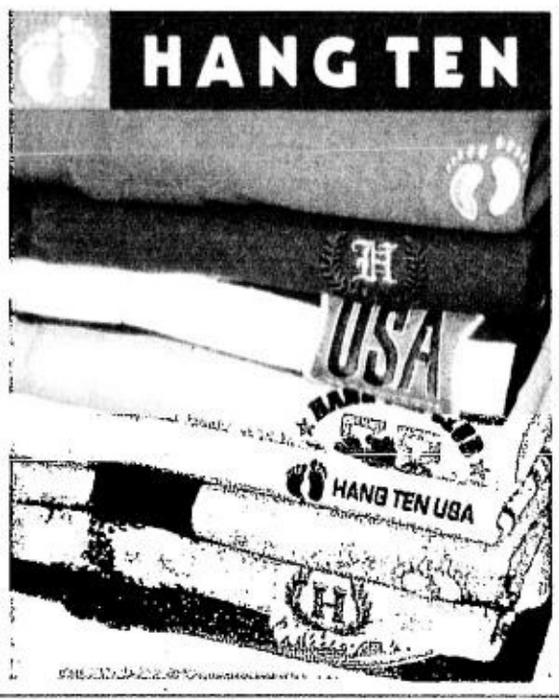

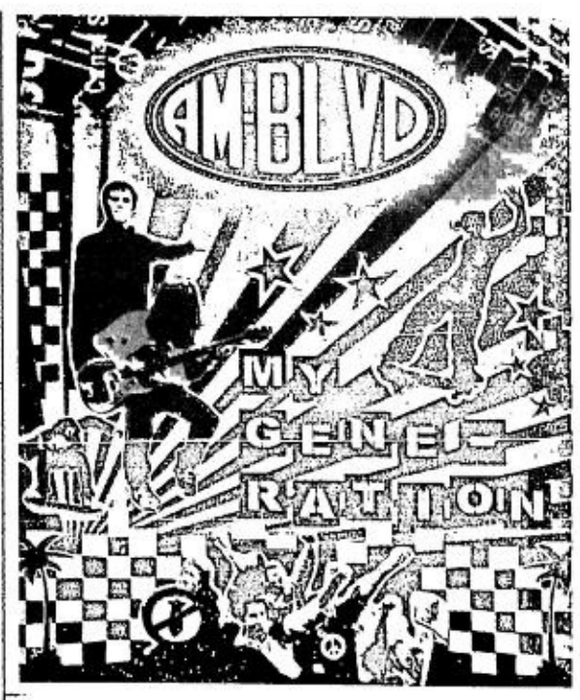

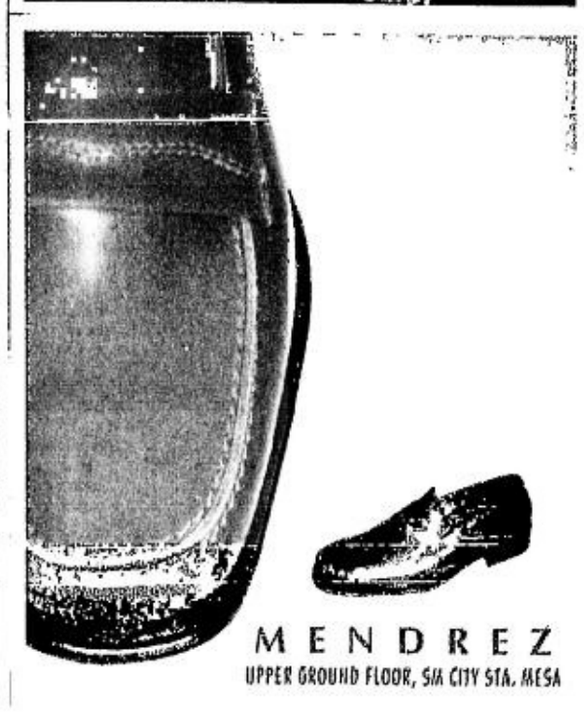

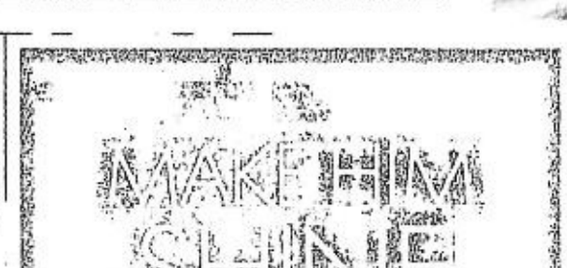

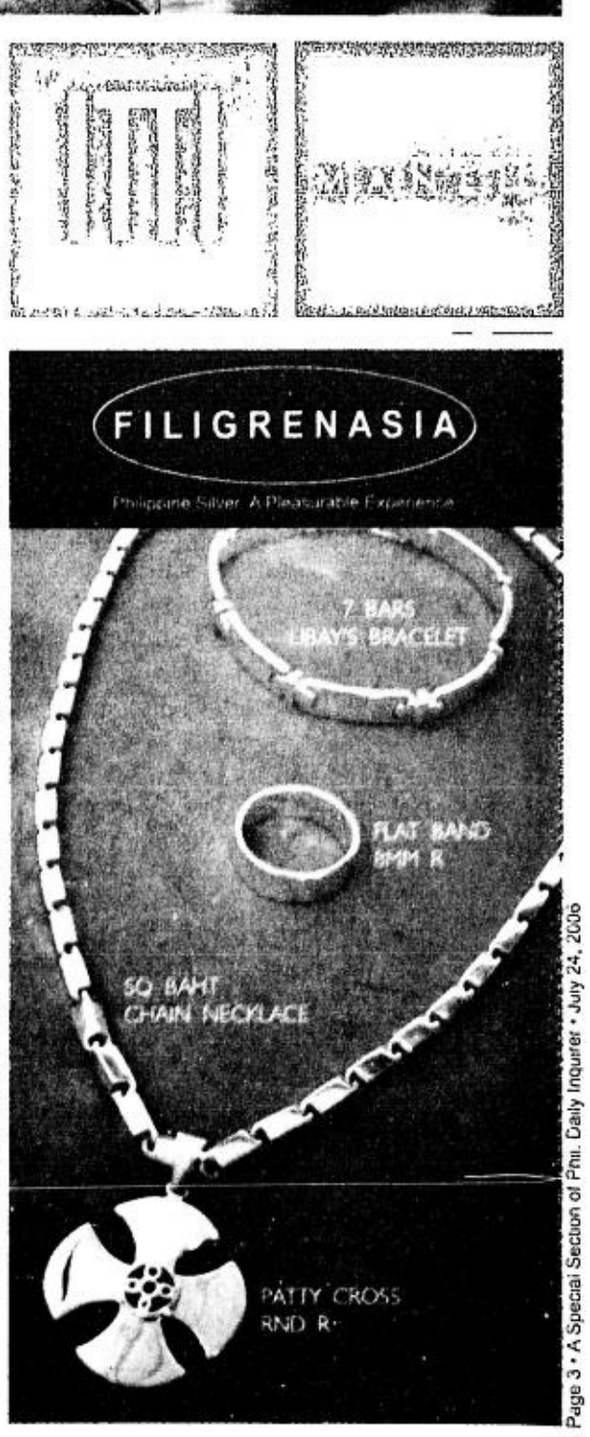

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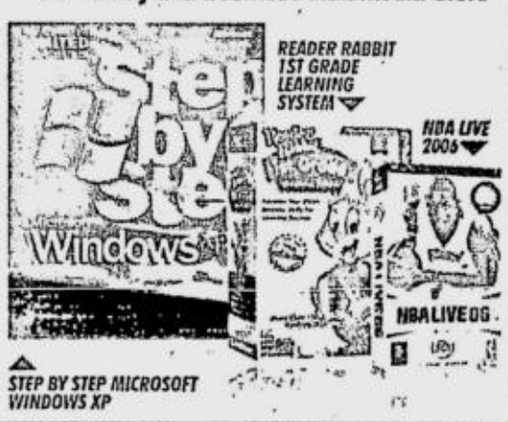

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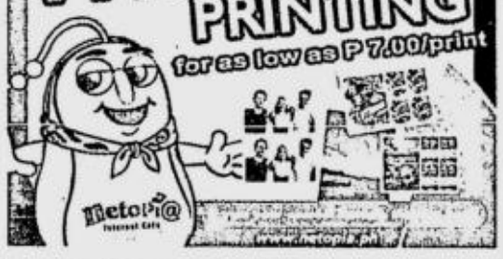

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- The need for constitutional changes: "The most prohibitive red tape is in our outmoded Constitution."
- Seek "better way to do politics; poll losers must not make the country pay for their frustrated ambitions."
- High praise for Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, but at the same time GMA condemns political killings, encourages witnesses to come forward to stop extrajudicial executions.
- Offers reconciliation: "For those who want to pick up old fights, we're game ... but what a waste of time. Why not join hands instead?"
- Ignores Senate.

GMA like CEO at board meeting, formal dance

By Fe Zamora

THE AFFAIR TO REMEMBER AT THE Batasang Pambansa yesterday had the trappings of a formal dance and a board meeting.

President Macapagal-Arroyo performed with precision like a seasoned CEO, complete with a PowerPoint presentation that included maps and graphics outlining the achievements of her administration and her vision of the future.

The protocol officers looked like they were going to dance the cotillion.

The generals came in their full regalia with medals on their chests and looked stern as they listened to their Commander in Chief's State of the Nation Address.

They were congratulated for their loyalty when Ms Arroyo faced a coup in February.

GMA LIKE/ A8

WINDMILLS in Batanes and Ilocos Norte will turn "megawinds into megawatts," promises President Arroyo during her State of the Nation Address before the joint session of Congress. On her sixth Sona, Ms Arroyo, all dressed in a shimmering fuschia terno, basks in the afterglow of her amazing political survival. *(More pictures on Pages A8-9.)* LYN RILLON

Sona: Promises, praises

GMA pays back allies, sets funds for super regions

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SHE VOWED NOT TO TALK about politics but her State of the Nation Address yesterday amounted to what could be a payback for her political supporters—from generals and lawmakers to Church officials and especially local executives—as she outlined a program creating economic "super regions" to spur development.

In her "feel-good" address, a confident President Macapagal-Arroyo said she would relinquish the presidency "after three years, eleven months and six days with much, if not all, that I have outlined completed."

She said the real challenge was not to blame but to fix what was wrong in the country and the economy.

Two years after embarking on a fiscal reform program, the government now has the money to address social inequity and economic disparity, stamp out terrorism, fight corruption, and undertake constitutional and electoral reforms, the President said.

"Finally, we have the funds not only to pay interest but to spend for education, better roads and bridges, provide good health services, and create more jobs in the country," she said.

SONA: PROMISES/ A8

HERE LIES IRONY. Where civil society and multisectoral groups, including the Leftists, catapulted Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the presidency through a series of peaceful protest actions, the Edsa Shrine is now "a no-rally zone." On Monday, police shields were lined up above the marble plaque marking the spot of Ms Arroyo's ascendancy, underscoring this ironic twist to history. REM ZAMORA

'She must be afraid of her own people'

By Volt Contreras

WITH EVEN BOTTLED WATER BANNED IN the plenary hall of the Batasang Pambansa where President Macapagal-Arroyo spoke, her VIP audience—and the public at-large—came in for a "choking" experience.

In terms of security blanket, only the 2003 state visit of US President George W. Bush rivaled Ms Arroyo's sixth State of the Nation Address yesterday.

One of the most tightly guarded state events in recent memory prompted remarks that she must be afraid of her own people.

From his detention in his rest house in Tanay, Rizal, Joseph Estrada described the woman who took over his presidency as a "leader afraid of the people." *(See story on Page A7.)*

SHE MUST/ A8

'Great PR speech but where will money come from?'

By Philip C. Tubeza and Daxim L. Lucas

HOUSE DEPUTY MINORITY LEADER Roilo Golez called President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address yesterday a political campaign speech.

"It was great PR, like a campaign with lots of names mentioned. It was very uplifting to the provinces and cities with governors, mayors, congressmen/women, generals prominently highlighted," said Golez.

"Pity those places and personages that were not mentioned. I noticed no senator was mentioned," he said. But, he added Ms Arroyo "did not talk much about the present state of the nation, what has been accomplished against targets."

Opposition Rep. Gilbert Remulla said Ms Arroyo had learned "how to preach to the choir."

"It's everything the audience wants to hear," he said. "But the devil is in the details. How we are going to fund all of this, I have no idea."

Newly elected Senate President Manuel Villar said he liked the President's plans but asked where the money would come from for the projects.

"I like the idea that there is an unprecedented relationship with local governments. Nevertheless, it should be clear how these are going to be funded," Villar said, echoing the sentiments of Senators Pia Cayetano, Ramon Magsaysay Jr. and Richard Gordon.

Benjamin Diokno, a former budget secretary, said he doubted the government could come up with the money.

"We need half-a-trillion pesos over some years and we don't have that," he

GREAT/ A15

Villar now leads 'chop suey' Senate majority, minority

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and TJ Burgonio

IN AN UNUSUAL MOVE THAT blurred party lines, the opposition joined administration senators in unanimously electing Manuel Villar the 28th Senate president at yesterday's opening of the third regular session of the 13th Congress.

VILLAR/ A15

Rains, class suspension spoil anti-GMA protest

By Norman Bordadora, DJ Yap and Blanche S. Rivera

EVEN THE GODS SEEMED TO FAVOR HER.

Bursts of monsoon rains aggravated by typhoon "Glenda" yesterday drenched and thinned the ranks of protesters who tried to get near the Batasan complex to denounce President Macapagal-Arroyo as she delivered her State of the Nation Address.

Police had mobilized up to 16,000 men to secure Ms Arroyo and the lawmakers, but the protests did not turn out to be the kind of stormy affair the lawmen had feared.

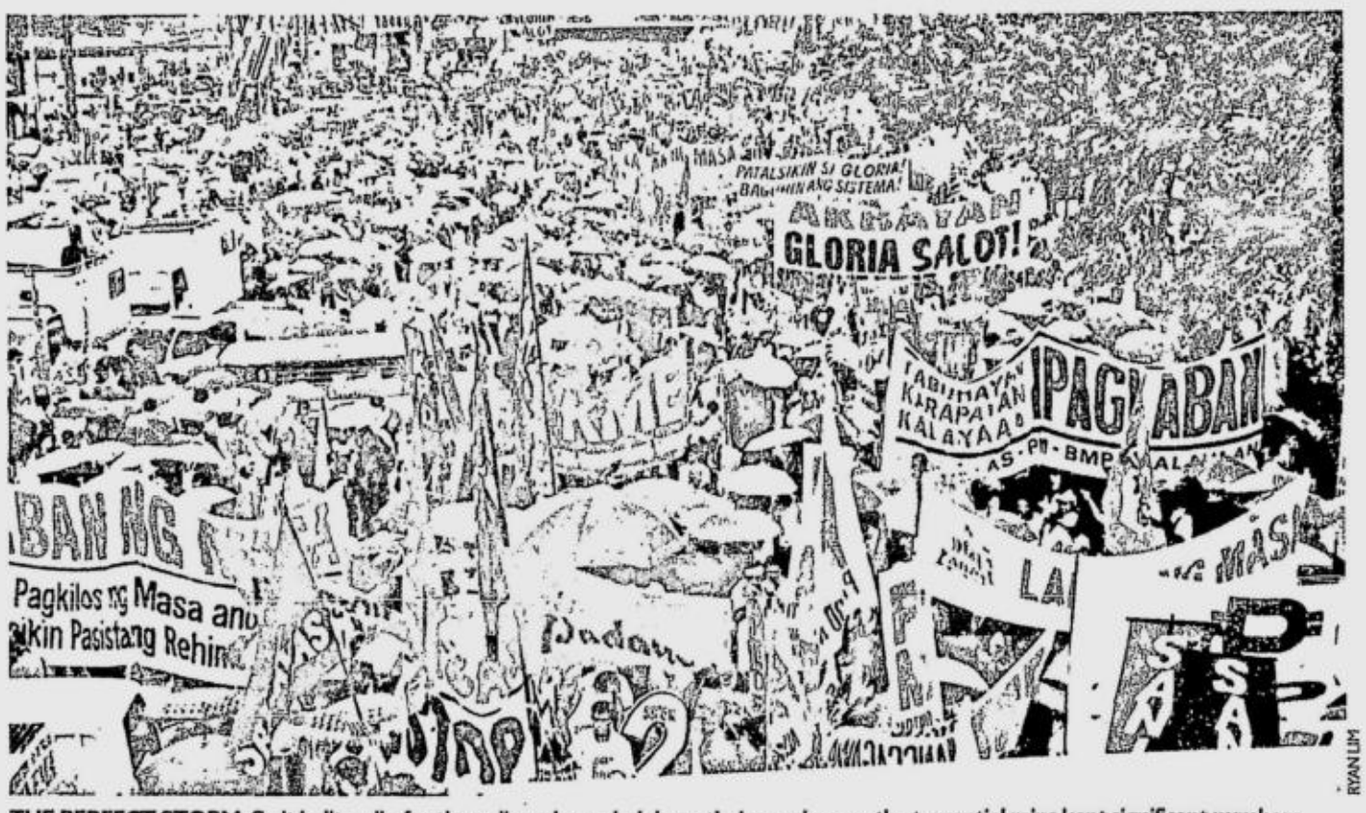
Not even half of the 40,000 people whom rally organizers had said they would mobilize showed up on Commonwealth Avenue near the Batasan.

Some organizers attributed the smaller than expected crowd to the bad weather. Others blamed it on the government decision to suspend classes in Metro Manila.

National Capital Region Police Office Director Vidal Querol described the rains as "a blessing."

As if symbolic of the toughness of their nemesis, the protesters also had difficulty

RAINS/ A7



RYAN LIM

THE PERFECT STORM: So it is, literally, for the police who scaled down their numbers as the torrential rains kept significant numbers away from the protest rallies along Commonwealth Avenue, and the enthusiasm of those who came seemed to have been washed away.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TUESDAY, JULY 25, 2006

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon will have stormy weather with rough to very rough seas. The western sections of Central and Southern Luzon will have occasional rains which may trigger flashfloods or landslides. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/07/24/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Stormy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

JDV sitting on impeach cases

'Too many complaints, everyone is confused'

By Michael Lim Ubac

CONTRARY TO EXPECTATIONS, THE IMPEACHment clock did not start ticking when the 13th Congress opened its third regular session yesterday.

The transmittal to the House justice committee of the four impeachment complaints lodged against President Macapagal-Arroyo during the last month-long congressional break was effectively blocked by Speaker Jose de Venecia who said he was stymied by the multiple cases.

"I'm confused as you are (as to) which impeachment complaint to transmit to the committee on justice," De Venecia told the congressmen in his speech opening the session.

Promptly last year

Last year, De Venecia had promptly sent the impeachment complaints filed against the President to the justice committee for appropriate action. Although a staunch ally of Ms Arroyo's, he had said then it was his constitutional duty to act speedily on the complaints.

Yesterday, the Speaker told reporters after his speech that he had 10 session days, or one month, to act on the new complaints.

SPEAKER Jose de Venecia listens to Minority Floor Leader Rep. Chiz Escudero during a break in the morning session of the House of Representatives at the Batasan Pambansa Monday. EDWIN BACASMAS

Agreement needed

He said he would ask Majority Leader Prospero Nograles, Minority Leader Francis Escudero and Rep. Simeon Datumanong, justice panel chair, to come to an agreement on which complaint to transmit to the committee.

"We have too many impeachment complaints, everyone is confused," he said, adding the opposition should have filed only one complaint against the President whom they accuse of stealing the 2004 election, abetting extrajudicial killings and muzzling dissent.

Two days?

De Venecia, however, assured the public it would take him only a couple of days to transmit the impeachment complaints to the justice committee.

Only then can the committee verify the sufficiency in form and substance of the complaints and, if warranted, proceed to conduct a full-blown hearing.

5th impeachment case

As he was speaking, Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio was filing a fifth impeachment case in the office of House Secretary General Roberto Nazareno in behalf of the latest complainants—13 retired generals who were prevented from entering the Batasan complex by the Presidential Security Group and the security force detailed to protect the President during her State of the Nation Address in the afternoon.

Custodio, an opposition lawmaker, filed the complaint at 11:26 a.m., shortly after De Venecia opened the session.

Private complainants had resorted to repeatedly filing the same case against President Arroyo over and over since June 26 to "cover all the dates" and ensure the one-year ban on the filing of a new impeachment complaint was complied with.

"The complaints are the same, so on whatever day the majority will specify as [the end of] the one-year ban... that will be adopted by the endorsers," Custodio said.

Nazareno accepted the fifth complaint despite the absence of the complainants since it had been "duly verified, subscribed and sworn to, and endorsed" by a House member.

"As long as the complaint is complete, you can even send it by mail," he said, adding that the four complaints filed earlier had been transmitted to De Venecia.

"I will transmit this one to the Speaker's office immediately," he said.

For his part, Deputy Majority Leader Edcel Lagman said all the four complaints filed during the break were "prohibited complaints because they were interposed before the expiration of the one-year ban rule."

Lagman, a lawyer, recalled that the first impeachment complaint filed last year was the Oliver Lozano complaint which was filed on June 27, 2005. It was endorsed two days later by Rep. Rodante Marcoleta and was referred to the justice committee on July 25, 2005. It was received by the justice panel the following day on July 26.

Thus, he said, all four complaints were prematurely filed since the "one-year constitutional injunction is yet to expire."

Based on Lagman's timetable, Nazareno said the ban would be on July 26.

Custodio assured Lagman that private individuals would be filing a complaint then.

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Death threats prompt BIR to go after big tax cheats quietly this time

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL Revenue is now going after bigtime tax evaders quietly after Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag received death threats from unidentified individuals, according to a top BIR official.

The official, who asked not to be named, said that Buñag was the latest BIR official to receive death threats in connection with the intensified campaign of the bureau to go after tax evaders under the Run After Tax Evaders (RATE) program.

The same official said that Buñag refused to talk about the death threats and preferred to focus on his job.

"Right now, we're conducting the investigation and filing the cases with less fanfare," said the official when asked why the BIR has stopped the weekly filing of cases against tax evaders.

"We are still filing tax cases but we are no longer announcing them in a press conference with the Department of Justice. But this does not mean we are going slow on suspected tax evaders," the official said.

The official disclosed that even the RATE chief, lawyer Arnel Guballa, whose wife was shot dead by unidentified men last month, had requested for transfer to another BIR office which is not connected with RATE.

The source said Guballa believes that his wife's killing was connected with his work as RATE chief of investigation, the same official said. Guballa, chief of the BIR's national investigation division, had also received death threats, the source said.

Buñag has said that the bureau would not entertain any settlement offer of the tax evasion charges filed in court.

Drilon still on collision course with Palace

By TJ Burgonio

THOUGH HE HAS STEPPED DOWN from his position as Senate president yesterday, Malacañang could still find Sen. Franklin Drilon as its gadfly and will likely tangle with him over the national budget.

Immediately after replacing Drilon, Senate President Manuel "Manny" Villar Jr. yesterday confirmed that his predecessor would chair the powerful committee on finance, which Villar used to head, in a virtual swap of positions.

"He will be the finance chair," Villar said. "That's what we had agreed on, and that's what the majority of senators want. We will abide by that."

Drilon, whose last year as Senate president saw the chamber locking horns with Malacañang over a number of contentious issues, was noncommittal, pointing out that nothing was final until he was elected on the floor.

"After the committees are reorganized, and we are elected to the committees, then we will make a statement. Until that time, all announcements are premature," he said.

The future chair of the finance committee will lead the Senate panel in negotiating with counterparts in the House over the P1.053-trillion 2006 national budget, which has yet to be approved.

Negotiations on the general appropriations act fell through before Congress adjourned its second regular session on June 8 following the furor over the P64-billion cuts made by the senators.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is expected to present the 2007 budget to Congress for approval within the next 30 days.

In the next few days, Villar would have to also relinquish his chairmanship of the public order committee. Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Jinggoy Estrada were reported being considered for the post.

Villar said one or two committees would have new chairs as he had to make good his "commitment" to supporters.

But he said the status quo would prevail regarding the rest of the 36 standing committees of the chamber, pointing out that a major reorganization could jeopardize the passage of key legislation in the short time between now and the 2007 mid-term elections.

"As much as possible we don't want to rock the boat in the first weeks. We will talk about it," he said in an interview.

In his farewell speech, Drilon said he felt no rancor in relinquishing his post to Villar. But after his speech, he looked glum when he walked down from the rostrum to the floor, where he was congratulated by his colleagues. *With a report from Juliet Labog-Javellana*

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Making a better life available to the Filipino

RP hopes for zero casualty in Lebanon

By Nikko Dizon

THE GOVERNMENT hopes to have a zero-casualty rate among the thousands of Filipino workers still stranded in war-wracked Lebanon.

"Our aspiration is to have a zero-casualty rate. We're still on it and we expect to maintain that, which is why we're exerting all efforts to get our Filipino workers away from the conflict," Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said yesterday.

In an interview, Asuque said the DFA had yet to receive a report on Filipino casualties as a result of a "direct hit" by Israeli bombs falling in Lebanon.

He said the domestic helper reported the other day to have been the first Filipino casualty of the war turned out to have suffered her injury in a fight with her employer.

"Her wounds were not war-related," Asuque told the INQUIRER, referring to Rosalyn Cuevas of Bacolod City.

Asuque said Philippine officials in Beirut verified this with Fr. Agustin Advincula, the only Filipino priest in Lebanon who has been helping distressed OFWs.

"Ambassador Roy Cimatu said that according to Father Advincula, the OFW had a fight with her employer," Asuque said.

Cuevas had reportedly called her sister in Bacolod City and told her she was hurt in the right arm when the fighting in Lebanon broke out.

Another domestic helper, Florelei Rubia-Lara, had sent a text message to her family in Zambales saying she had been injured by glass fragments when an Israeli bomb shattered the windows of her apartment in Jounieh outside Beirut.

"Of course, slight injuries cannot be avoided. It's impossible that no one will get hurt. You can get hurt from just running to seek cover," Asuque said.

Last Sunday, 232 of the 34,000 Filipinos in Beirut arrived in Manila, comprising the first batch of OFWs evacuated from Lebanon.

The government has ordered the total evacuation of OFWs only in southern Lebanon.

Alert level 3, which urges Filipinos to relocate to safer areas, remained enforced in other parts of the country.

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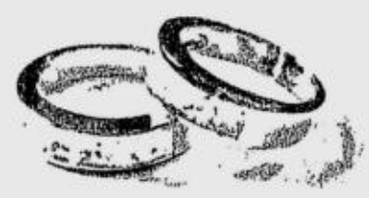

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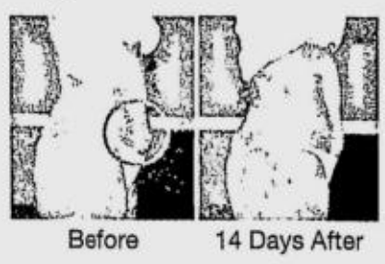
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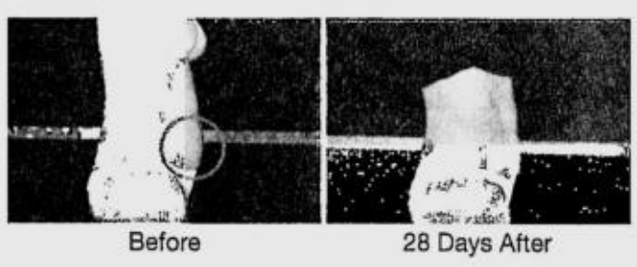
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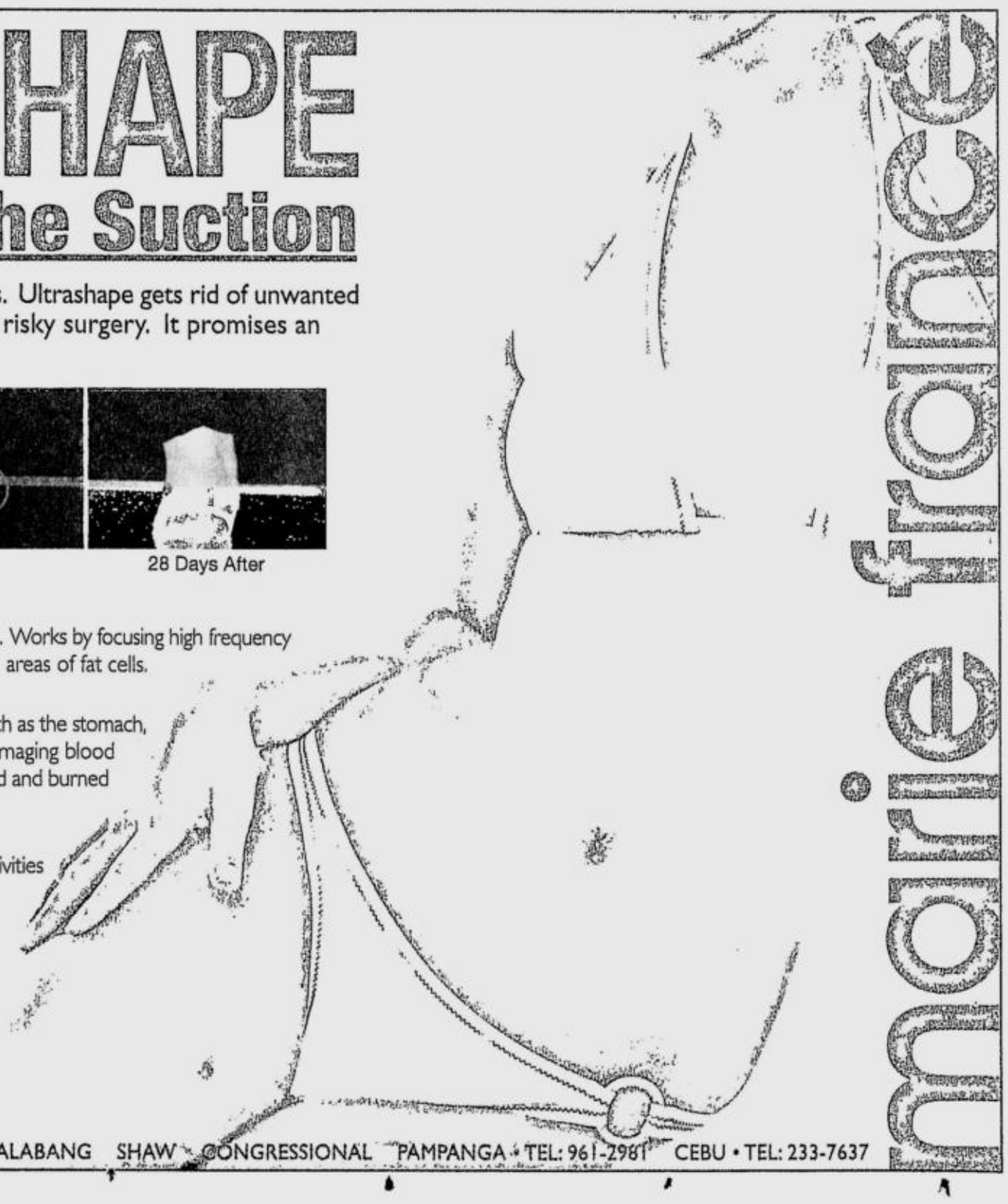

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marie france

Stormy weather wreaks havoc on court schedules

YESTERDAY'S STORMY weather wreaked havoc on court schedules in Makati City where several anticipated hearings at the regional trial courts had to be postponed.

The strong winds and unceasing rains brought by typhoon "Glenda" prompted the suspension of the hearing into the rebellion charges against six militant lawmakers implicated in a plot to violently oust President Macapagal-Arroyo last February.

Party-list Representatives Satur Ocampo, Teodoro Casiño and Joel Virador of Bayan Muna, Crispin Beltran and Rafael Mariano of Anakpawis, and Liza Maza of Gabriela had confirmed on Sunday they were attending the 9 a.m. hearing of their rebellion case at the RTC.

As it turned out, they did not have to appear in the sala of Branch 150 Judge Elmo Alameda as all hearings at the Makati RTC were canceled by early morning.

The case is a consolidation of two rebellion cases filed by the Department of Justice—one against Beltran and rebel soldier Lt. Lawrence San Juan filed on Feb. 28 and the second a case filed on May 12 against the five lawmakers, former Sen. Gregorio Honasan and 41 others. The court has yet to set another date for the hearing.

Glenda also canceled yesterday's trial of the four US Marines accused of raping a Filipino woman at the Subic Bay Freeport last year. *Tarra V. Quismundo*

'Glenda' heads for Taiwan

TYPHOON GLENDA (INTERNATIONAL name: Kaemi) brought heavy rains and winds to Northern Luzon yesterday as it moved toward Taiwan, shutting down classes, government offices and the stock exchange in Metro Manila, officials said.

The seventh storm this season was packing winds of 130 km per hour and gusts of up to 160 kph as it approached Batanes, where authorities raised a weather alert.

The typhoon was expected to make landfall over central Taiwan early today, then weaken into a tropical storm before making its second landfall along China's Fujian province later on Tuesday, forecasters said.

In Metro Manila and the rest of Northern Luzon, still reeling from Tropical Storm Bilis that left about two dozen dead in landslides and flash floods, authorities suspended school classes and work in government offices. The stock exchange also was closed.

In Taiwan, fishing boats sought shelter at ports and residents were warned to prepare for torrential rains and heavy winds.

As of Monday morning, Kaemi was about 300 km southeast of the southern tip of Taiwan, over the Pacific Ocean, the Central Weather Bureau said.

Kaemi is the Korean word for ant.

September opening under study

INCOMING EDUCATION SECRETARY Jesli Lapus said yesterday he would study the proposal to move the opening of the school year from June to September to avoid the inclement weather.

"If classes start in September, it won't be too rainy. On the other hand, it might be too hot inside the classrooms during the summer," Lapus said.

He said he will study the pros and cons of moving the school opening, which has been broached recently.

He said moving the school opening would also give more time for the construction of more classrooms since the yearly education budget would have been released by then.

"We can solve this by moving the start of the school year when there will be a lot of classrooms constructed," he said.

Lapus, a staunch supporter of President Macapagal-Arroyo, is set to formally take over the Department of Education at the end of the month from officer in charge Fe Hidalgo, who took over after Secretary Florencio "Butch" Abad resigned last year. *Alcuin Papa*

Japan to provide grassroots support

THE JAPANESE GOVernment will not only participate in monitoring the progress of the truce in Mindanao but will also provide "grassroots grant assistance" as its contribution to peace efforts in the region.

"We, the Japanese, are determined to work hand-in-hand with you to achieve a peace settlement that is acceptable to all stakeholders in Mindanao," said Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso in a speech delivered last Sunday on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and the Philippines.

"Japan realizes that peace and stability in Mindanao is crucial to maintaining regional stability in Southeast Asia," Aso said.

Japan's participation in the international team monitoring the implementation of the ceasefire between government troops and the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) will focus mainly on "playing a leading role in the economic and social development area." *Nikko Dizon*

PAKISTANI Ambassador Muhammad Naeem Khan

All Nations Women's Group marks 59th year

THE ALL NATIONS Women's Group will celebrate its 59th anniversary on July 31 at the residence of Pakistani Ambassador Muhammad Naeem Khan in North Forbes Park, Makati City, ANWG president Cristina Galang-Caedo announced.

Theme of the affair is "All Nations Women's Group Providing a Comprehensive Network of Service for the Global Community."

The ambassador's wife, Anila Khan, will give the opening remarks to be followed by her husband who will deliver the keynote address.

Ambassador Khan will also induct the new members of the ANWG. Musical and dance numbers will be performed by the Ramon Magsaysay Group and the women-members of the diplomatic community, Caedo said.

Querol at Rotary Kamuning

DIRECTOR VIDAL E. Querol, police chief of the National Capital Region, will be the guest of honor and speaker at the regular meeting of the Rotary Club of Kamuning at 7:30 tonight at the Sulo Hotel in Quezon City.

NA NAMAN?!

Wala na bang katapusan ang away pulitika sa atin?
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Pakiusap lang sa mga namumuno: tama na ang debate, talumpati, batuhan ng akusasyon, at pag-aagawan sa kapangyarihan.

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MASA BANSA
PAGKAKAISA AT PAGBABAGO

TAMA NA ANG GULO, PARA TAYO'Y UMASENSO.

Suit vs Lafayette alarms business group

THE FEDERATION OF Philippine Industries (FPI) has expressed alarm that any injunction order stopping the 30-day test run of the mining operations of Lafayette Philippines Inc. on Rapu-Rapu island in Albay could derail the entry of more foreign mining investments into the country.

FPI president Jesus Arranza said the government's target of raising $122 million in mining investments by yearend has been imperiled by the injunction case filed against Lafayette and Environment Secretary Angelo T. Reyes before the Makati Regional Trial Court.

"The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) has recorded a total of $47.91 million in fresh investments from January to May this year," Arranza noted.

"But now, this court petition against Lafayette and the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) might force foreign investors to bring their money elsewhere despite the renewed enthusiasm generated by the government in the mining sector," the FPI official added.

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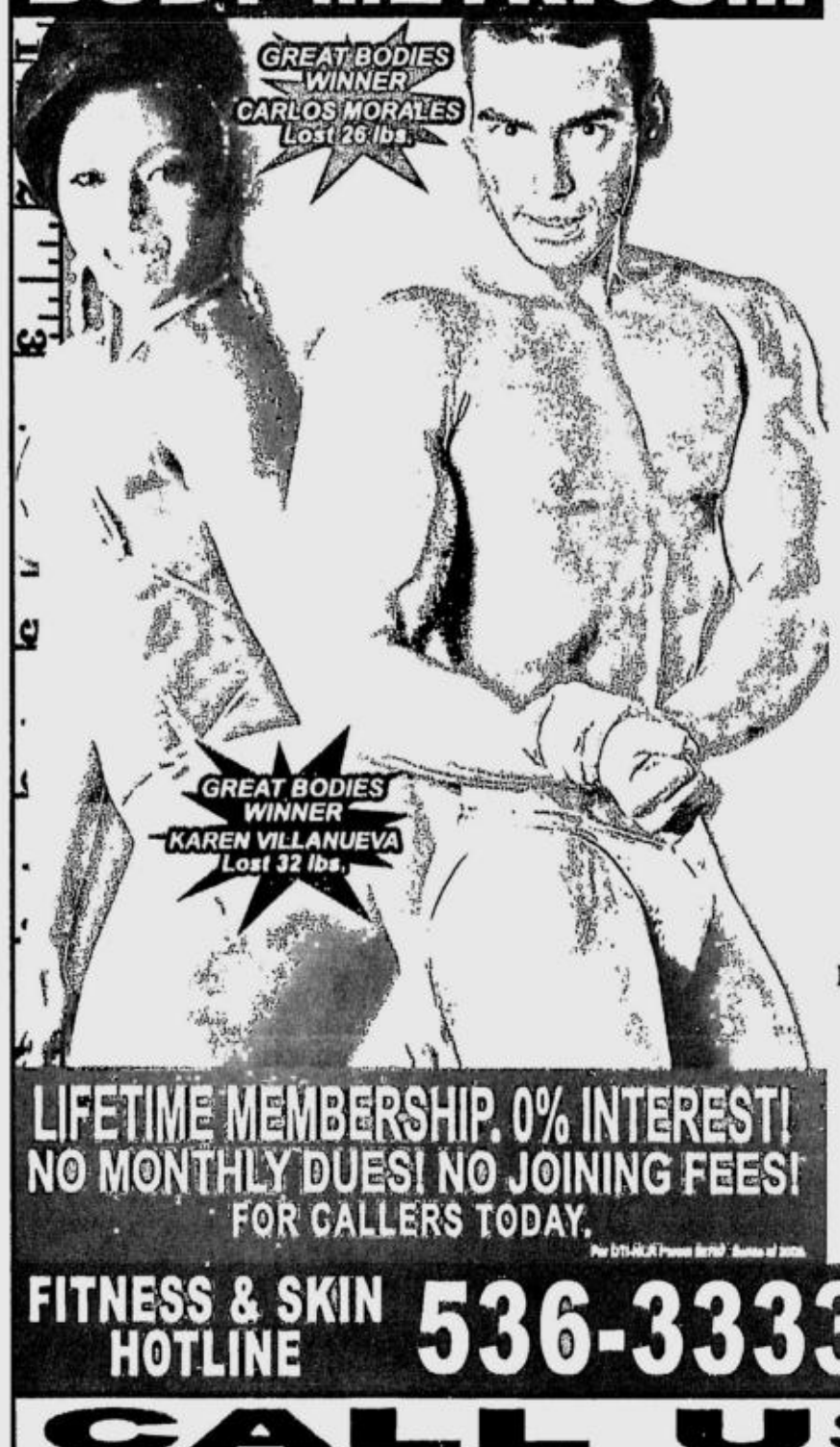

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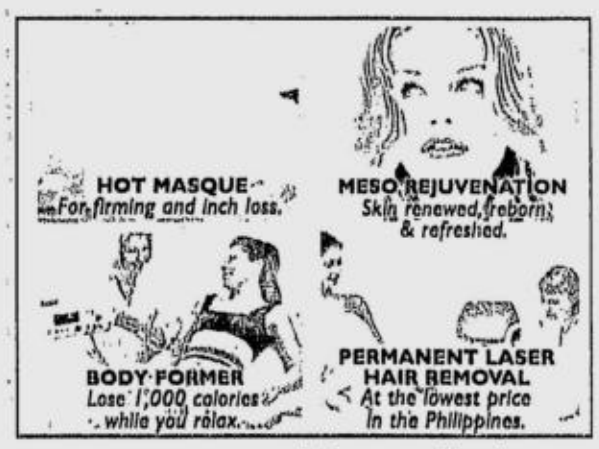

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Reject the super-elite's deception and misinformation

IN THEIR ATTEMPT to discredit the irrepressible movement toward Charter reform, the oligarchic families, special-interest groups and their minions—who style themselves as 'One Voice'—mislead and misinform the Filipino people.

This is a tactic that members of the super-elite class—the super-rich people of Manila—have used, all too often, whenever political reformers threaten their economic and social interests.

In fighting Charter reform, One Voice has used the power of its money to make up for the bankruptcy of its ideas. Its television ads are slick—and cost hundreds of millions of pesos. But slick does not mean intellectual quality. One Voice has not disproved the urgency and centrality of change: the shift to a unicameral parliamentary government to rebuild the country from the costly and glaring failures of the presidential system.

Presidential system breeds dictatorship

One Voice does *not* say why it loves the presidential system that, for over 70 years, has produced a dictator; made military adventurism an endemic threat to popularly-elected governments; created the phenomenon of "creeping coup" and constant instability; and made 'people power' an abused extra-constitutional political remedy.

In truth, the presidential system has been a breeding ground for dictatorship. One Voice is silent on this—as it misleads people on the success of the parliamentary system in most of Europe and Asia. The political scientist Juan Linz of Yale writes that *"Europe's more accountable prime ministers—and their parliamentary counterparts in countries like Canada, Japan and Australia—represent a safer institutional alternative" to the presidential model set by the United States.*

We appeal to the nine million Filipinos who have signed the People's Initiative to amend the 1987 Charter—and millions more of our local officials and their constituents, and those who are exasperated with a system that no longer works—to reject One Voice as just another attempt by oligarchic families to deceive and misinform our people.

What we stand for

Here are the things for which ***Sigaw ng Bayan*** stands:

1. *We are for a shift to parliamentary government and a unicameral parliament.* To continue with presidential government is to condemn our country to failure—in the world's fastest-growing region.

2. *We seek the abolition of both the Senate and the House of Representatives and the creation of a single legislature, a single chamber.* Having two houses of Congress is like having two boards of directors running a single corporation. This arrangement, as evidence has shown, is ruinous to the country. One Voice wants the presidential system and the Senate and House to continue —and thus perpetuate divided government.

Whose words do we hear when 'One Voice' speaks?

'One Voice' has launched a nationwide TV campaign to stop public opinion from tipping in favor of Charter change.

Those who oppose Charter change are alarmed because citizens who favor it have multiplied—from only 29% in March 2005 to 36% in October 2005 and then to 43% in March 2006.

One Voice's slick TV spots (done in full color and booked for prime time by Campaigns and Grey) started showing on July 14.

One Voice's campaign will run for six weeks—until 30 August—on all the major networks: on GMA-7, ABS-CBN, ANC and ABC Channel 5.

During the first two weeks, the campaign will be running 16 spots; during the third and fourth weeks, 31 spots; and during the fifth and sixth weeks, 91 spots.

P2 million a day

On average, One Voice will be spending **P2 million** daily on *each* of the three networks.

And since **P6 million** a day will add up to **P42 million** a week, **P42 million** over six weeks will run to a grand total of **P252 million.**

Where is the P252 million for the TV campaign coming from?

We believe it only right that citizens should challenge One Voice to reveal where the **P252 million** it is spending on its TV campaign has come from.

And since there is no free lunch, it is also right that citizens should ask what One Voice's benefactors expect in return for their money.

And who are these people who are funding One Voice's cause?

We in *Sigaw ng Bayan* have never hidden our identities and our specific interests. We're local officials, professionals, small businessmen, office workers. Our name is Legion, for we are many.

We are one in our realization that it is not individual leaders but the political system itself which is responsible for the way we have fallen behind most of our neighbors in the world's fastest-growing region.

We are one in our wish to assure our young people that there is hope for this country.

From One Voice we expect the same kind of openness, probity and sense of the nation.

3. *We are for elections in 2007.* And we are for synchronized elections every five years thereafter—to regulate campaign spending that costs billions of pesos—and favor only the wealthy few.

4. *We are* not *for extending indefinitely the tenure of those already in power.* We are *not* about to take away the people's rights to vote for the country's Head of Government. One Voice misleads when it says otherwise.

5. *We are* not *for having a powerful Interim Parliament and a super-President.* The Charter amendments we propose will clip the powers of the President, some of which the Prime Minister would then exercise. The President will remain the Chief Executive, and the Prime Minister the chief operating officer of government. One Voice misleads when it says otherwise.

6. *We want a Prime Minister who will be directly accountable for how the government performs in office.*

An honest, efficient and open government will guarantee the Prime Minister's stay in office. Inefficiency and corruption will lead to his peaceful removal—through a *no-confidence vote* by Parliament. This ready resort to a confidence vote will remove every justification for military coups, destabilization and extremist plots funded by power-hungry politicians and business oligarchs.

7. *We want a justice system strong in the enforcement of our laws.* We are not about to weaken the Supreme Court, or any other part of our justice system. One Voice misleads when it says otherwise.

8. *We want the culture of turncoatism swept away—to reform our politics by its roots. Wala nang mga balimbing.* We insist that government be based on party platforms—and *not* on charismatic personalities. By prolonging this culture, One Voice wants to perpetuate the root of our negative and destructive politics.

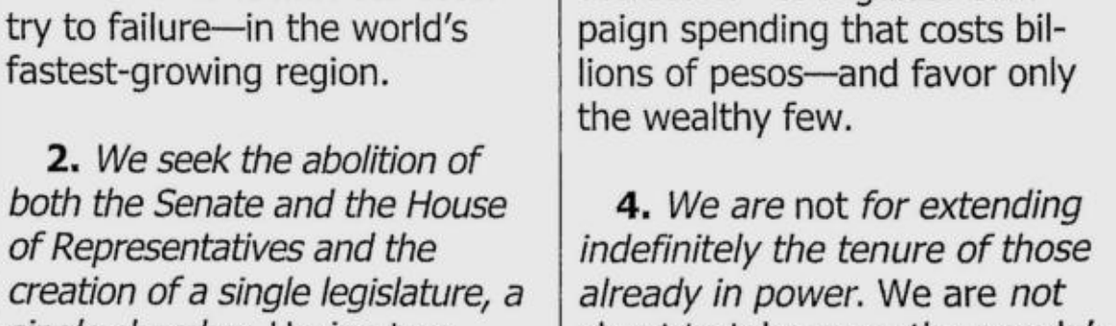
9. *And we want to build up a responsible Opposition*—one neither beholden to special interests nor bound by ties to the politicized sector of the military. Under the parliamentary system, the Opposition is the government-in-waiting—ready to take over the responsibilities of office once the incumbents fall. In a parliamentary system, a responsible Opposition provides the real checks and balances to ensure government transparency and efficiency.

Charter change our only hope

Charter change is our only hope —to change our system of government, our negative culture of politics.

Let us not be deceived by bankrupt ideas and cosmetic reforms.

The key to national survival is change—Charter change.



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GMA 'misrule' should stop, Erap says in own Sona

By Norman Bordadora and Leila B. Salaverria

EX-PRESIDENT JOSEPH ESTRADA yesterday called for a continuing search for the truth behind the allegations plaguing President Macapagal-Arroyo, saying a leader afraid of the truth coming out "is a leader afraid of the people."

In a statement from his detention at his Tanay, Rizal, estate, Estrada also said the "repression, corruption and misrule" under Ms Arroyo should stop if the country was to move forward.

Estrada is himself facing charges of corruption and is on trial in the Sandiganbayan.

Afraid of people

"We must search and uphold the truth. It is said that a leader who is afraid to let the people judge the truth in the free exchange of ideas is a leader afraid of the people," said Estrada in his own State of the Nation Address.

To this day, Ms Arroyo has not fully answered a host of allegations, including claims that she conspired with former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to rig the results of the 2004 elections.

Damaged future

"We cannot proceed with this state of the nation for it can only result in a damaged future," Estrada said.

He said: "The true state of the nation is also found in the many instances of the selective administration of justice, where those who criticize this regime are summarily charged and arrested while the allies of this regime who commit plunder and many crimes of graft and corruption are allowed to go scot-free."

Divided house

He also cited the repression of the rights of political dissenters.

Estrada said Ms Arroyo's Sona portraying the country as doing well was a "big lie."

"The true and authentic state of the nation is found in the hard, dangerous and repressive society being experienced today by our people and this cannot be denied because this is what you feel, see and live in your daily lives," he said.

The true state of the nation shows "a house divided, corrupted and in complete disarray."

"Today, we do not only have a damaged culture, but a damaged republic, weakened by damaged institutions, and administered by a government that has lost credibility and working under a damaged system of justice and morality," Estrada said.

Rains, class suspension spoil anti-GMA protest

From page A1

burning a 13-foot effigy of Ms Arroyo—portrayed as Hitler—because it had been drenched for hours by the rain.

Unable to turn it to ashes, the militants poked and tore it to destroy it.

Police estimated the number of protesters at 5,000-7,000. Militants said they numbered more than 10,000.

Whatever the number, police set up a human blockade to keep them about 3 km away from where Ms Arroyo was speaking.

Police later said they had actually scaled down the number of men mobilized for the Sona because of the absence of serious destabilization threats.

Only half of the 16,000 men planned to be mobilized were deployed around the metropolis, Querol said.

"There were still threats, but they were already being monitored," he said. "We no longer saw any possibility that anyone would attack Batasan Pambansa."

'Batasan 5' plus plus

Members of the so-called Batasan 5—the militant congressmen who recently sought refuge in the House to avoid arrest on rebellion charges—took part in the protests, joining one of several leftist factions in the area.

They were Deputy Minority Leader Satur Ocampo, Joel Virador, Teodoro Casiño, Rafael Mariano and Liza Maza.

Mariano was soaked by the rain after a thunderstorm broke as he was delivering a tirade against Ms Arroyo.

In a separate area occupied by groups under Laban ng Masa were Akbayan Representatives Mario Agujo, Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel and Loretta Ann Rosales, and former Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman.

Others who spoke included former Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. and former Sen. Ernesto Maceda. Also seen was Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos.

Biggest 'boos'

At one point when the rains fell again, about 200 antiriot police abandoned their positions. Some sought shelter under an overpass, munching peanuts, smoking or sending text messages on their mobile phones.

Almost every round of applause that echoed in the halls of the Batasan was matched by a chorus of "boos" outside.

The biggest boo came when Ms Arroyo hailed Army Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, whom militants accuse of being behind the killings and disappearance of political activists.

"She's making a hero out of a butcher," Sanlakas president Wilson Fortaleza said, adding this would embolden the military's "death squads" even more.

Dinky still hopeful

"I did not expect her to be so brazen in praising the suspect in so many killings," Akbayan president Ronald Llamas said.

"The government's participation and culpability in the political killings is clear with this brazen praise of Palparan," he said.

The failure of Ms Arroyo's political opponents to force her to step down failed to demoralize Soliman.

"I'll admit they succeeded in corrupting people last year," Soliman said. "Their squid tactics worked, especially among the middle class ... but the people will act in their own time and space."

Voice from China

"There are fewer people out on the streets now obviously because of the rains, but it does not mean there is less anger. The people are watching," Soliman said.

Fr. Robert Reyes, another staunch Arroyo critic who has been hibernating in China after losing his Quezon City parish, did not miss the chance to criticize Ms Arroyo yesterday.

Speaking on the phone with Sanlakas' Michelle Licudine, Reyes said that despite the rosy picture painted by the President, nobody but she would be rejoicing.

"Who will be happy with a liar? With a cheat? With a thief? Who will be happy with someone who invokes the Pope's name and bribes the bishops?" Reyes said.

Not Glenda but Gloria

Anakbayan chair Eleanor de Guzman said luck was still with Ms Arroyo, but she added: "Everything seems to favor her, but in the end, she'll lose."

Others found humor in the situation.

"We're suffering more from typhoon Gloria than typhoon Glenda," said Partido ng Manggagawa secretary general Judy Ann Miranda. She said the typhoon's name was really "Gloria" but was changed "out of protocol."

Let the rains fall

The police were pleased.

"I wish it would rain harder," said a policeman.

But the ground commander, Senior Supt. Elmo San Diego, said the downpour had its disadvantages.

"Tomorrow, all these policemen would call in sick because of a cold," he said.

The protesters seemed to agree.

"This is the wettest Sona ever. We are about eight to ten thousand here and 52 are already sick. They either have fever, cough or a cold," a militant spokesperson said.

The ralliers braved the thunderstorms with raincoats, hats, jackets and umbrellas.

Ms Arroyo's effigy, complete with Hitler's distinct mustache and garbed in a general's olive drabs with skulls for medals, was paraded through Commonwealth Avenue.

Different economy

Bayan Muna secretary general Nathanael Santiago said the effigy showed Ms Arroyo's "fascist tendencies."

"This is worth it as long as we get our message across that Gloria is a fascist," said Carl Ala, of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas.

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas painted a different picture of an economy which Ms Arroyo says is thriving.

Citing the Ibon Foundation, Pamalakaya said the unemployment rate had grown to 11.4 percent and that 14 percent of the labor force had been compelled to look for jobs abroad for lack of opportunities in the country.

Protests in provinces

Members of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers from various schools in Malabon City and Navotas also joined the protests, ignoring an appeal from the Department of Education to stay away.

"For those who are committed, rain and floods could not stop our desire to express our grievances and join the rallies," said Jocelyn Martinez, a Grade 3 teacher.

Some of the teachers waded through flooded streets to take part in the protests.

More than 8,000 members of militant groups staged separate rallies in Cebu, Negros Occidental, Iloilo, Aklan and Capiz.

About 3,000 protesters marched on the main streets of Iloilo City, denouncing not only Ms Arroyo but fellow Ilonggo, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

In Mindanao, protests were held in the cities of Davao, Cagayan de Oro and General Santos.

In Baguio City, a group of Church leaders presented at a prayer rally the widow of Baguio activist Marcos Bangit as a symbol of the "true state of the nation."

Agustina Bangit, whose husband was murdered in June, said that her plight mirrored the political crisis Ms Arroyo has been trying to hide with statistics about the economy. *With reports from Luige A. del Puerto, Leila B. Salaverria and Nancy Carvajal in Metro Manila; Vincent Cabreza, Desiree Caluza and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Nestor P. Burgos Jr., Carla P. Gomez, Felipe Celino and Jolene R. Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau; and Aquiles Z. Zonio and Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Corrections

IN THE JULY 15 ISSUE, a Sports story on Page A25—"Bautista shines as Letran keeps card unblemished"—misstated that La Salle triumphed over Philippine Christian University in a National Collegiate Athletic Association basketball game. The school that beat PCU on July 14 was Colegio de San Juan de Letran—not De La Salle University College of St. Benilde.

* * *

IN THE JULY 24 ISSUE, a story on Page A4—"Japan joins ceasefire monitors in Mindanao"—misspelled the surname of the Japanese foreign minister. The name of the Japanese foreign minister is Taro Aso—not Azo.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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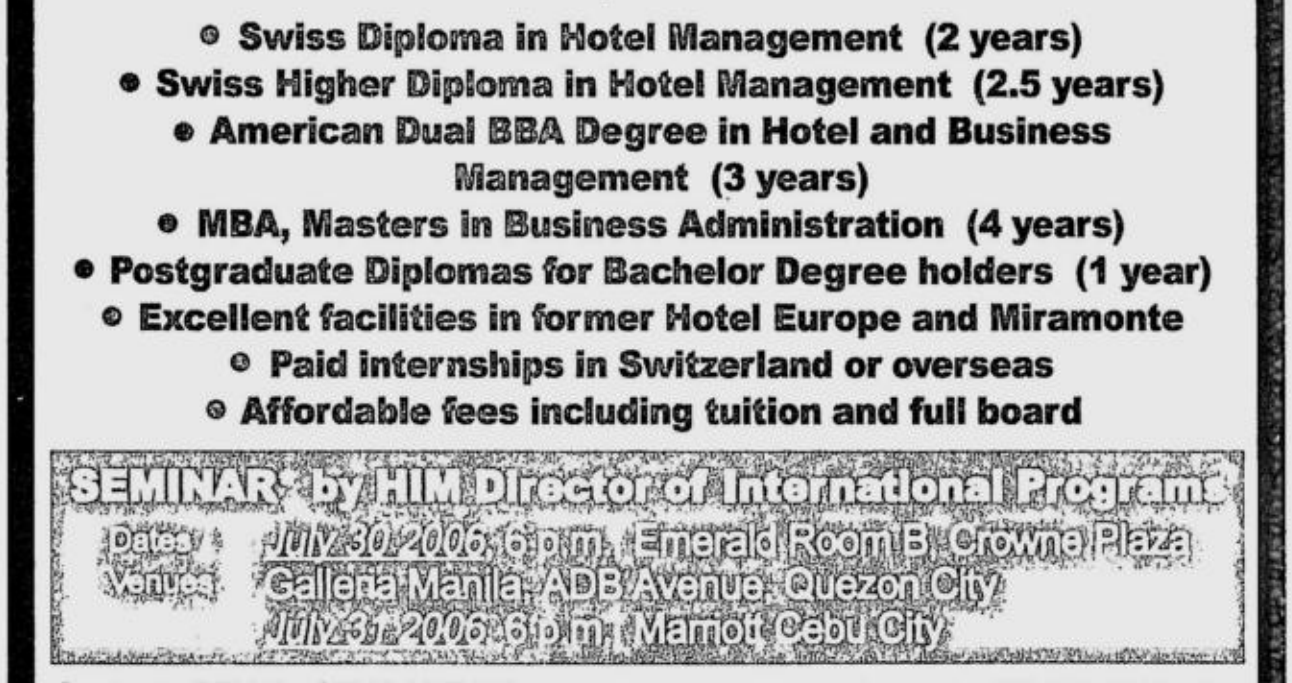

THE HOUSE OF GLORIA

THE PALACE CHOICE of blockade—container vans—are placed end to end across Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City to stop protesters from even catching a glimpse of the Batasan complex.

GUARDIANS OF MENDIOLA, the Manila Police District officers and men attend Mass on Monday morning at the San Beda chapel before taking their posts at freedom's symbol.

TOO WET TO BURN: Protesters poke at GMA's Hitlerish effigy.

ERIK ARAZAS, EDWIN BACASMAS, JOAN BONDOC, RAFFY LERMA, RYAN LIM, LYN RILLON, REM ZAMORA, BING GONZALES AND AUGUST DE LA CRUZ

DAVAO City protest
Also Cebu, Iloilo, Ne
Occidental, Gensan,
Cagayan de Oro City
Baguio, etc.

Sona: Promises, praises, thanks

From page A1

Ms Arroyo said she was ready to embark on a gargantuan capital investment program for the government after putting in place fiscal reforms two years ago and focusing on providing better social services since last year.

5 super regions

Based on her plans, the President wants to implement her megaprojects through the creation of five "super regions"—in northern Luzon Agribusiness Quandrangle, Metro Luzon Urban Beltway, Central Philippines, Mindanao and the cyber corridor.

To attract investments and strengthen the super regions, the President said her administration would push to make food costs affordable and labor wages competitive, reduce electricity rates, modernize infrastructure at least cost, mobilize and upgrade production technology, and cut red tape.

The President said the megaprojects and super regions were meant to lay the groundwork for the country's shift to a federal form of government through her administration's continuing drive to change the Constitution, a topic she only touched briefly this time.

"The most prohibitive red tape is in our outmoded Constitution. We need constitutional change to bring our rules of investment to the new millennium," she said.

While she ignored lingering questions about the legitimacy of her rule in her sixth Sona since she came to power, Ms Arroyo was very open in her gratitude to people and institutions that stood by her in her most serious political crisis.

She called her supporters in Congress the "true friends of the Filipino people."

She also thanked the "greater majority of soldiers and policemen who were loyal to the flag and Constitution."

"The huge and deep core of your loyalty has earned the nation's accolade. The few mutineers have been condemned by the people. They and their partisan cohorts and funders are being brought to justice," the President said.

Ms Arroyo survived an a coup attempt in February but continues to be hounded by allegations of vote-rigging in the 2004 election, human right abuses, corruption and dictatorial tendencies, amid concerns over military restiveness.

Ms Arroyo also thanked the Filipino people "who have resisted persistent, if not pathetic, calls for despair ... for anarchy instead of harmony."

"Thank you, thank you from the bottom of my heart," she said.

Villar

Her appreciation of Senate President Manuel Villar's presence was palpable, considering the cold shoulder she got from past Senate President Franklin Drilon who had led calls for her ouster.

She reserved her stinging remarks for political foes who continued to work for her removal from office although she remained reconciliatory.

"Surely, there must be a better way to do politics, so that those who lose elections do not make the country pay for their frustrated ambitions. There must be a better way so that those who win the nation's mandate to govern can work without delay and whimsical obstruction. There must be a better way," she said.

"For those who want to pick up old fights, we're game, but what a waste of time," the President said to loud applause.

Join hands

Her political enemies have filed fresh impeachment complaints against her on nearly the same charges as last year's.

"Why not join hands instead in the biggest challenge of all, where we all win or we all lose the battle for survival and progress of our one and only country. I don't want it said that, in the end, I defeated my enemies," Ms Arroyo said.

"I would rather have it said that all of us, you and I, friends and foes today, achieved together a country progressive, prosperous and united," she said.

Ms Arroyo only referred to persistent moves to oust her in jest.

"Thank God, I thought, or someone might also try to impeach me for violating Article 15 of the Constitution on the solidarity of the family as the foundation of the nation," she said, referring to the growing problem of broken homes with heads working overseas.

Bishops and projects

Among those who filed new impeachment complaints against Ms Arroyo were some Catholic bishops.

But the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines issued a pastoral statement two weeks ago ruling out support for fresh moves to impeach Ms Arroyo.

In a move that could be interpreted as a way of reciprocating this support, the President mentioned the names of two members of the CBCP in her televised address.

She announced that her administration would allocate P200 million a month for small irrigation projects, like the flood control plan of the Region II Development Council headed by Bishop Ramon Villena.

The President also congratulated Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal on the drop in briberies for public sector contracts in Metro Cebu, which she said helped upgrade the infrastructure there.

Pacquiao

Instead of figures showing the economy's strength, the President presented happy and contented Filipinos—former Cordillera People's Liberation Army member Ama Balunggay and his grandson, who received a land title from the government, and call center agent Lady Lyn, who was grateful she didn't have to leave the country to help her family.

To make Filipinos feel good about themselves, the President acknowledged the presence in the audience of boxing sensation Manny Pacquiao, Miss Tourism Queen International 2006 Justine Gabionza, Filipino medalists in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games, and the first Filipinos to climb Mount Everest.

"We are a great people. We have honest students and honest cops. We have scaled the heights of Mount Everest, dominated Southeast Asian Games, won international beauty titles, and of course punched our way in the boxing world. Our people compete and win every day in every imaginable job throughout the world," the President said.

"Individually, we've taken on the world and won; together we must take on the challenge of creating a new, peaceful, humane and competitive nation and prevail," she said.

Ms Arroyo also condemned the unsolved killings of hundreds of people, mostly left-wing activists. "In the harshest possible terms I condemn political killings. We urge witnesses to come forward, together we will stop extrajudicial killings," said the President.

Hail to Palparan

Militants attribute many of the killings to Army Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan.

But the President saluted the controversial general for his iron-fisted approach to insurgency. "We will end the long oppression of barangays by rebel terrorists who kill without qualms even their own," she said.

"In the 7th division area of responsibility, Jovito Palparan has come to grips with the enemy. He will not let go until the communities in the long night of terror emerge into the light of law and freedom," Ms Arroyo said.

Allies to get funds

To ensure that her allies in local government get their funds and the automation of elections is financed in the face of the failure to pass the 2006 budget, the President pushed for the approval of the supplemental budget.

Economy growing

She said there was a lot to feel good about the country.

"Our economy is growing over the longest period in the last quarter century—22 quarters of economic growth; the earnings of the poorest families grew by over 30 percent in the first three years of my administration; and the number of poor families dropped from 28 percent to 25 percent or equivalent to two million people freed from poverty," she said

"According to Thornton and Punongbayan, 70 percent of medium-size business owners are optimistic, the fifth most optimistic among 30 countries, just behind India, Ireland, South Africa and China," the President said.

GMA like CE meeting, for

From page A1

There was Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, the new chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

There too was Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, who received profuse praise from Ms Arroyo. The Army regional commander who has been criticized for alleged human rights abuses appeared embarrassed by the attention, sheepishly smiling while remaining seated.

The other generals, like Army chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, rose to acknowledge their President's compliments.

166 rounds of applause

The President's 62-minute speech received 166 rounds of applause. This did not include the eight times she was cheered as she stepped up to the dais until she was through acknowledging the officials present.

The longest applause lasted 47 seconds and erupted after she said, "*Panahon nang ibalik ang kapangyarihan sa taumbayan at lalawigan* (It's time to return power to the people and the provinces)." The applause was joined by cries of approval and marked by a standing ovation in the gallery.

The address was by far the most applauded of Ms Arroyo's Sonas. It was also possibly the most applauded since President Corazon Aquino's first address in 1986 following the People Power revolution. Ms Aquino got 80 rounds of applause.

Former President Joseph Estrada was applauded 23 times in his first Sona in 1998.

In her relatively brief address last year, Ms Arroyo garnered 33 rounds of applause and five standing ovations.

No 'hakot' visible

The usual ubiquitous "*hakot*" (bused in) crowd from the nearest slums were nowhere near the

'She must be afraid of her own people'

From page A1

To opposition leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., the excessively heavy security around the Batasan complex when Ms Arroyo delivered her Sona showed a leader "under siege."

"I can't imagine a president speaking to the people and being guarded by the police from her own people," Pimentel said.

The order to make this year's Sona security more stringent than usual came from the host himself, Speaker Jose de Venecia, according to Emmanuel Albano, house deputy secretary for media relations.

Tightest in years

"You will notice it as soon as you enter the gate," said Albano, whose shooting blood pressure over the past two weeks seemed to prove the rigidity of the security concerns.

While Albano was talking to the INQUIRER in his office, a nurse was taking his blood pressure.

"This is the tightest Sona in years," he conceded. "Almost like the Bush visit."

For as De Venecia described the country in his speech reopening the 13th Congress, "we almost became a former democracy," Albano added. (*Story on Page A2.*)

Ms Arroyo's traditional speech at the Batasan came two weeks after authorities claimed to have uncovered a plot by military rebels to sow violence during the Sona, including seizing lawmakers as hostages. The plot was supposedly gleaned from documents police said they found in a rebel safe house practically just across the street from the Batasan complex, in the neighboring Filinvest 2 subdivision.

Like int'l flight

It was also Ms Arroyo's second Sona since the "Hello Garci" election cheating scandal and her first since surviving an alleged coup attempt in February.

At the Batasan itself, security measures previously unheard of were put in place, to the surprise of journalists and guests who considered themselves veterans of the yearly rite.

Save for the VIPs, almost everyone was subjected to up to three friskings and bag checks starting at the main gate—as though they were boarding an international flight.

Vehicles were inspected thoroughly, with the occupants asked to alight. Laptops were cleared only after their owners had turned them on and off in front of sentries. One newspaper reporter said guards even asked him to play his cassette recorder—just to make sure.

Color-coding stickers

The INQUIRER tested one recently imposed Sona rule and was proven correct: It tried to bring in a bottle of water, bought from the House canteen, through the North Wing entrance but was politely reminded by a *barong*-clad lady guard that "it can't go further from here."

Although color-coded ID passes had been used in past Sonas to restrict movement, especially by the media, up to seven colors were used under this year's scheme—signifying more checkpoints.

On top of the IDs given during the second check, the bearer still had to secure stickers on the third check before finally being allowed into the plenary building.

Locked in

The doors were shut and nobody was allowed to leave the building during the hourlong speech.

In and around the complex, a composite team made up of the Philippine National Police Special Action Force, the Army, the Presidential Security Group and the in-house Legislative Security Bureau posted themselves conspicuously in spots never before considered part of their patrol zone.

According to Albano, catering crew members were also "precleared" for the Sona.

Only the select

Measures implemented since 2002 also limited the number of people—congressmen, staff and media members alike—allowed to greet Ms Arroyo upon her arrival on the Batasan grounds and to see her off.

"We've seen old photographs (of the crowds) and it was bedlam. Now you can clearly see who's really in the welcoming committee," Albano said.

PSG men in *barong* were the first to greet visitors and direct traffic at the main gate, while police minded the ID desks. Army soldiers with long firearms manned the parking lots, covered walks and lobbies of other Batasan buildings.

Nothing like it

Outside Albano's office itself, three to four men in black combat uniforms toting M-16 rifles stood guard. Albano couldn't remember having such a setup in past Sonas.

The PNP earlier said it would mobilize up to 16,000 personnel in Metro Manila alone to maintain peace and order in and outside the Batasan yesterday. The number was bigger by around 2,000 men the normal PNP contingent in the National Capital Region on a regular day.

When Bush was in Manila for a few hours on Oct. 18, 2003, the PNP security blanket involved some 10,000 of its personnel.

For Ms Arroyo's Sona after the July 27, 2003, Oakwood mutiny—considered then the most serious challenge to her administration—the PNP only fielded 5,000 men.

House Sergeant at Arms Bayani Fabic said the July 7 raid on the supposed rebel safe house was a primary concern of his office's security preparations.

Up to 1,000 personnel from the police and military—dubbed "Task Force Sunshine"—secured the Batasan grounds, he said.

He said the House "Defense Plan" included contingency measures in case of untoward events, such as an assassination attempt, hostage-taking, emergency evacuation, or a bomb attack. He declined to give details.

Fabic said his office had ample time to draw up the plans, as early as last May 31. *With reports from Leila B. Salaverria and Norman Bordadora*

WELCOME HONORS with AFP Chief of Staff Esperon

SNOBS: Party-list Representatives (from left) Mario Aguja, Etta Rosales and Risa Hontiveros join the Commonwealth crowd, not their peers.

JUBILANT in her Ito Curato gown with panuelo.

NAME-DROPPABLES Chief of Staff Mike Defensor and Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya arrive with their wives.

NOT AN INATTENTIVE SON: Rep. Mikey Arroyo does his thing before his mother delivers her speech.

IMEE, too.

ELEGANT ENTRANCE for the President's younger son Dato and wife Kakai.

Peping Cojuangco and wife Tingting.

...O at board ...rmal dance

upper gallery nor in the side lobbies where they ate their packed lunches in previous Sonas.

In their place in the upper gallery were smartly dressed provincial governors, city and municipal mayors and other invited guests. The men came in *barong* Tagalog and suits, the women in the traditional Filipina gown or formal dress.

There was no clash of colors this time.

Last year, opposition groups adopted peach as their color motif to signify their clamor to impeach Ms Arroyo. The President's allies then had come in blue in honor of the Virgin Mary to whom they had prayed for help for their beleaguered President.

Yesterday, red was the dominant color, with the President herself dressed in a flaming red gown.

Boxing champ

Presidential Chief of Staff Mike Defensor escorted world boxing champion Manny Pacquiao into the halls of the House.

"I'm here to support GMA," Pacquiao declared.

Former Rep. Jose "Peping" Cojuangco came with his wife Margarita "Tingting" Conjuangco. Five months ago, Cojuangco hosted a party in his Makati residence for a group of businessmen and civil society stalwarts allegedly plotting the ouster of Ms Arroyo.

Air of confidence

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the July 7 arrest of six rebel soldiers contributed to the friendly atmosphere at the Sona. The six were allegedly plotting to seize Congress and take lawmakers hostage during the President's address.

"The air is full of confidence, see? The President did not even have to take a dig at her detractors," Ermita told the INQUIRER at the cocktails after Ms Arroyo's speech.

Dramatizing the success of her land distribution program, Ms Arroyo called on Ama Balunggay and his grandson, Jacob.

According to the President, Balunggay is a former fighter of the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA), the rebel group led by the late Conrado Balweg that signed a peace pact with the government in 1986.

In April, Balunggay finally got the title to his land 20 years after the signing of the peace accord. *With a report from Mel Lawrence de Guzman, PDI Research*

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OPINION

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Good or bad?

EDITORIAL

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, IN HER STATE of the Nation Address yesterday, was expected to give a glowing account of the economic situation of the nation. We will comment on her report tomorrow, but today we will give our readers just statistics and information and let them decide for themselves whether the state of the nation is good or bad.

The gross national product grew 5.8 percent in the first quarter of this year, compared with 4.9 percent last year. Gross domestic product grew 5.5 percent in the same period compared with 4.2 percent last year. Exports in January to April 2006 totaled $14.8 billion, compared to $12.8 billion in the same period in 2005, or a 15.6 percent increase.

The budget deficit decreased to P146.8 billion in 2005 from P187.1 billion in 2004. It was only P31.5 billion in the first semester of this year.

Foreign direct investments rose to P63.5 billion in the first quarter of 2006 from P31.5 billion in the first quarter of 2005, or a 102-percent quarter- on-quarter increase.

The average peso-dollar exchange rate in June 2006 was P53.16 to $1, compared with P55.18 to $1 in 2005. The remittances of overseas Filipino workers from January to May 2006 totaled $4.9 billion, up 14.8 percent compared to the year-ago level.

In June 2006 the inflation rate was 6.7 percent, compared to 7.6 percent in June 2005. The apparent decrease, however, is illusory, because the constant rise in the prices of oil products in the past six months has had a domino effect, triggering increases in the prices of practically all goods and services.

In 2003, 24 out of every 100 families did not earn enough to satisfy their basic food and non-food requirements. This was a slight improvement from the 2000 situation wherein 28 out 100 families experienced income shortfall, the National Statistical Coordination Board said.

According to the Philippine Labor Force Survey, total employment in April 2006 grew by 2.5 percent, resulting in a national employment rate of 91.8 percent. But this figure is disputable, because in April 2005 a new definition of unemployment was adopted by the NSCB. If the employment picture here is good, why is it that every year hundreds of thousands of Filipinos leave for work abroad? As of December 2004 overseas Filipino workers were estimated at 8 million, and every year the total is growing by close to 900,000.

The departure of hundreds of thousands of Filipinos abroad is aggravating the brain drain. Dr. Bu Castro, Philippine Medical Association president, said 30 percent of the country's registered doctors have migrated to North America. Since 1994, more than 100,000 nurses have left the country, according to Dr. Fernando Sanchez, executive director of the Association of Philippine Medical Colleges.

Carl Marc Ramota, quoting reports from Migrante International, said about 20 percent of the 160,000 Filipinos working as domestics in Hong Kong, Singapore and the Middle East are former teachers. The migration is continuing because of the lack of good job opportunities in the Philippines.

The shortage of 6,832 classrooms has supposedly been remedied, but only because the President applied creative math: the pupil-classroom ratio was increased from 45 to 1 to 100 to 1 under a two-shift schedule of classes.

Because of a continuously decreasing health budget, the public health sector can now be said to be in an emergency room. Usually treatable diseases like tuberculosis, cholera, diarrhea and measles end up killing thousands of people due to lack of doctors and hospitals and the high prices of medicines.

Because of widespread poverty, more and more women and children are falling victims to white slavery. Government agencies and NGOs estimate that from 300,000 to 400,000 women and from 60,000 to 100,000 children are being trafficked annually.

From July 2005 to June 2006 there were 6,266 murders, 7,759 robberies, 12,210 assaults and 2,766 rapes. In 2004 there were 34 kidnapping cases.

Corruption continues to be a way of life in government. Up to now, for instance, very little has been done about the P728-million fertilizer scandal, the P1.3-billion contract of the Comelec with Mega-Pacific eSolutions for automated polling machines and the $2-million bribery charge against former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

The death penalty has been abolished, but extrajudicial killings continue unabated; since 2001, 41 journalists and 238 leftists and activists have been killed.

Has there been any change in the state of the nation since 2001 or even in the past year?

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Kids as Sona

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

EVER HEARD OF "MEGAN'S LAW"? IT IS THE toughest sex-offender registry law in the United States. New Jersey adopted it after 7-year-old Megan Kanka was raped, then murdered, by a twice-convicted child molester who moved into the house across her home.

The law requires that citizens be warned when dangerous sex offenders are freed. Members of parliament from the United Kingdom visited New Jersey to see how the "Megan Law" worked, the British Broadcasting Corp. reported.

Indeed, the litmus test for any country is how it treats children. The BBC report underscores how crime against children has spread worldwide. The Philippines, for example, "is a source, transit and destination country for men, women and children trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labor," the US State Department's "Trafficking In Persons Report 2005" pointed out.

The 2006 report did observe "initial progress" here. The number of prosecutors were jacked up, but convictions were sparse. Republic Act 9208 clamps stiff penalties on trafficking. In May 22, President Macapagal-Arroyo signed the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006.

Under Republic Act 9344, children 15 years and below are exempt from criminal liability. Those aged 15 to 18 years may be criminally charged only if it's shown they had discernment when they ran afoul of the law.

Shoving arrested kids into the slammer, often jammed with hardened criminals, is now banned. They're turned over to social workers. Cases are referred to rehabilitation programs, instead of trial courts.

These laws are fine, as they go. But it took all of nine years for church and non-governmental organizations to lobby for enactment of RA 9344, the juvenile justice bill. As beneficiaries, children are voiceless, unable to protest and vulnerable.

Many officials, however, heed only those who protest loudest. "The squeaking wheel gets the grease," the old axiom says. So, was it the Pinoy trait of *hiya* (shame) that did the trick?

In August 2005, CNN and ITN aired stark images of thousands of Filipino kids, held in adult, overcrowded jails. Chris Rogers documented cases of children physically and sexually abused by adult inmates, some of them convicted sexual offenders.

The footage sparked a torrent of outraged protests here and abroad. In a February 2006 follow-up telecast, Rogers and his team revealed that children continued to be abused. Only then did the President certify as urgent the bill to Congress.

And what of young lives wrecked while politicians didn't bother. What is the bill extorted by official deafness? *"Can you hear the children crying, o my brothers / 'Ere sorrow come with the years,"* asks Elizabeth Barret Browning.

To mean anything, laws must be implemented. The "Megan Law," a Gannet News Service investigation found, stands as "one of the weakest in the nation" because of lax implementation. And that is true, too, for our laws on abused kids. "Laws are like cobwebs," Jonathan Swift wrote. "They catch small flies but let wasps and hornets break through."

The Juvenile Justice Law has resulted in more children released. Preda Foundation, for example, got charges against 22 dismissed. Now, 16 are enrolled in formal school, the rest are receiving informal literacy education. If they were in Cebu City, they'd be targeted by vigilantes that City Hall coddles.

But overall, implementation is slow. There's money for a VAT-replenished pork barrel. But the government has only a handful of poorly staffed recovery and rehabilitation centers. Central Luzon has one jammed poorly managed government home for trafficked girls. Good Shepherd sisters and other religious groups pitch in.

"Hardly any are helped to bring charges against their traffickers," the Preda Newsletter notes. The Department of Social Welfare sends most home. "They are soon trafficked again. There is no interest to raid sex clubs and rescue children by the police, labor or social welfare departments. 'It's bad for tourism,' officials say."

The more insidious problem is the *areglo* (case fixing), says Fr. Shay Cullen whose life has been devoted to protecting kids. All too often, local government officials and parents arrange for "compensation" by the sex molester. "Making an *areglo* is a common practice." Local officials pocket most of the money and give parents a pittance.

"The parents don't realize that they are, in reality, pimping their child. And so are the officials. But the abuser goes free to molest more children."

Cullen cites the case of 8-year-old Annie. Preda staff had rescued her. Then, "we found out that the *areglo* or payoff was made. The abuser came back and raped Annie again."

"We have him in prison awaiting trial," Cullen says. "He faces life in prison if convicted... We endure meanwhile death threats from his powerful relatives and friends."

Yesterday, the President delivered her predictably up-beat State of the Nation Address. And just as predictably, the opposition derided her assessment. Isn't this another sterile exchange between those who turn deaf to the sighs of orphans and drink the tears of children?

But children, including the ravaged Annie, like Megan, are the truer Sona. They're the valid yardstick to measure all our actions by.

Thank God for Bishop Tobias

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

YOU JUST HAVE TO STAND UP AND APplaud. Where the other people being implicated by the coup plot have denied the charges against them, Bishop Antonio Tobias has gone right out and freely admitted he gave aid and comfort to Lt. Lawrence San Juan. Why shouldn't he? At the time he did, San Juan was still a very idealistic young man who wanted to change the world. Or at least who wanted to change his country by way of putting an end to an illegitimate government.

Bishop Tobias did say with absolute candor when he admitted his "crime" that it was Church practice to give sanctuary to those who sought it, a practice that dated back to when the enemies of the governors-general would seek refuge in churches during Spanish times. Even the governors-general balked at the thought of violating the sanctity of churches and left well enough alone. Certainly, the last thing they did was punish the sanctuary-givers, even if they seethed at the thought and contemplated all sorts of ways, not least more taxes, by which they might get back at the priests.

Subsequently, Bishop Tobias (some prelates truly deserve to have that sublimely lofty title permanently affixed before their names) has refused to justify his deed. And rightly so: Why should he justify it before someone like Raul Gonzalez who needs to justify his existence, personal as much as official, before God and man to begin with? Unlike GMA, Bishop Tobias did not say, "God has put me here." He is not that presumptuous. He has merely said: "I will not put up any defense. Let the country be my judge." Unlike GMA, Bishop Tobias knows that in a democracy at least it is easy to hear the voice of God. The principle is not, *"vox Dei, vox Garci," or "the voice of God is the voice of Garci," it is "vox populi, vox Dei,"* or "the voice of the people is the voice of God."

I was tempted in light of this to have a T-shirt made with the words, "I ... am ... guilty" printed on it, the serial dots meant to recall the monotonic "I ... am ... sorry," in order to admit equally freely that I am as guilty as Bishop Tobias of the "crime" in thought if not in deed. And to cajole the rest of the world to wear the same T-shirt to express the judgment they have rendered upon the good bishop. Well, maybe somebody who has the time can do it.

But, yes, I am guilty of the "crime" too. I have never bothered to hide the fact that I most earnestly want the present illegitimate government, or more accurately the current coup regime, ended. My own preference is through people power and/or civil disobedience, but I do not mind other means on the (all-important) proviso that what ensues afterward is snap election and not any government or council, permanent or transitional. I have no wish to help end an unelected authority only to put up another one. The only solution to an unelected government is an elected one.

Had San Juan sought shelter in my 72-square-meter tenement housing in Pagasa (grandly called "condominium" by the National Housing Authority, probably with much ironic glee), I'd have gladly given it to him. Our two bedrooms might not hold enough space for him, but he would have been welcome to the sofa in the sala, its wear and tear amply hidden by a thick cotton cloth, in the company of excellent CDs, excellent DVDs, and even more excellent books. The offer remains good for other "coup plotters."

Which brings me to the one thing that is totally outrageous in all this. Frankly, I would like for Gonzalez to summon me to shed light on anything, including his ignorance, because I would like to say to him that unless he and his cohorts can produce anyone of the patent lowlife the Senate has been summoning to shed light on brazen wrongdoing in this country, I see no reason why I should. Frankly, I cannot understand why the people being summoned by the civilian and military authorities to shed light on the Danilo Lim's withdrawal of support shouldn't just say that in lieu of agreeing to it. To this day, despite the Supreme Court finding EO 464 illegal, the government refuses to allow witnesses, both unwilling and willing, to materialize before the Senate to testify to humongous perfidy. The excuse of the unwilling is that they are busy doing important government work. Like what—lying, cheating and stealing some more? I don't know why the people being summoned by the justice department and the National Bureau of Investigation shouldn't just say they have better things to do than humor the ill-humored. Or that they are busy plotting some more.

More than that, Gonzalez is threatening Bishop Tobias with jail for giving succor and sanctuary to lawbreakers? My dear man, wasn't that what you, the whole of Malacañang and the whole of the Department of Foreign Affairs, just did to Garci and that joke, Bolante? Aid and abet fugitives from justice? No, more than that, appropriate, employ and devote the entire resources of government to hide criminals from justice. Just look at their faces, man, and see if "*mandurugas*" isn't written on their foreheads.

If Bolante's arrest by US immigration authorities hadn't been leaked to media, it would have remained unknown to the public. The only thing we may be thankful about in his case is that he at least cannot say that he was never hiding abroad, he was here all the time, it's not his fault if no one could see him. Though the way things are, I don't know that even that is guaranteed. Bolante can always say, it wasn't him that was arrested in the US, it was Willie Nep. He was here all the while—Garci can testify to it, they were together.

There was one thing Gonzalez told Bishop Tobias that went past being execrable to being execrably funny. "No one," he warned, "is above the law."

If only he would grasp the concept.

Courting the LGUs

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

AS THIS COLUMN WAS BEING WRITTEN, hours before President Arroyo's State of the Nation Address, the buzz was that she would bat, as never before, for greater autonomy for local government units in some kind of federal system. This wouldn't be surprising. Since she assumed the helm of government in 2001, GMA has avidly courted the support of the LGUs. One of the first things she did was to return the portion of the LGUs' internal revenue allotment of about P5 billion that had been retained by former President Estrada and diverted to other government operations. Over the last five years, the President has been going around the country many times, distributing infrastructure projects in an effort to jumpstart the rural economy and sustain GDP growth through increased rural spending.

* * *

The LGUs have reciprocated her by their unstinting support. The near-solid support of the 1.7 million members of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP) has been the source of GMA's staying power through various coup attempts as well as demands for her resignation. The LGUs have also been the major engine for the administration's Charter change campaign, as well as the major mechanism for the people's initiative, which is said to have already gathered over 10 million signatures. But GMA's continued low acceptance and trustworthiness ratings, as shown by the recent Pulse Asia poll, show that the LGUs need to project more the administration's positive side.

* * *

There's a practical side to GMA's assiduous courtship. The opposition claims that the 2007 mid-term elections will be a referendum on her administration, and that's correct: all mid-term elections are. Thus, GMA needs the support of the LGUs to get a comfortable majority of congressional allies—or members of the new parliament, as the case may be—elected. And as House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles has pointed out, if GMA is to avoid a third impeachment in 2007, she needs continuing control of the House. This has made the opposition fearful that GMA would resort to a massive infrastructure program in time for the campaign, and hence the efforts of senators to delete the "Kilos Asenso" and the "Kalayaan Barangay" grassroots funds from the 2006 budget.

* * *

With Israeli tanks and armed forces going deeper into southern Lebanon, it can be foreseen that the crisis in the Middle East would be prolonged, despite the efforts of various nations to find a solution. On the eve of her mission to the Middle East over the weekend, US Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice was quoted as saying that she was not keen on pressing for a ceasefire, as it could only mean renewed and perhaps fiercer hostilities. What she seeks to forge is a "long-term solution." The world can only wish her luck, for such long-term solution has evaded that region for over 50 years now.

* * *

What's easier to see is that the price of oil, of which practically 90 percent is found in that region, will be continue to spiral in case of prolonged conflict there. This makes it imperative for the Department of Energy to intensify efforts to develop an alternative fuels program. This was expected to be pledged by the President in her Sona.

The alternative energy program aims to make the country 60 percent self-sufficient by 2010, through the use of such abundant domestic agricultural products as sugar, coconut, cassava and corn. Coco-biodiesel or coco-methyl ester (CME) is one example. A blend of regular diesel and one percent CME has been used by 1,150 government vehicles since 2004, and test findings show that this blend has improved engine performance and mileage as well as reduced vehicular emissions.

* * *

An alternative to regular gasoline is bio-ethanol, a light alcohol produced from fermenting carbohydrates such as sugarcane, corn, cassava or nipa. It's said that as much as 10 percent bio-ethanol can be blended with pure gasoline without having to modify vehicle engines. Experts point out that bio-ethanol's high oxygen content reduces carbon monoxide levels and harmful exhaust emissions. It helps cars run smoothly by boosting octane levels and cuts cancer-causing emissions by more than 50 percent.

What's great is that both CME and bio-ethanol are locally sourced and renewable, and will therefore boost the agriculture sector. Because they are bio-degradable and emits much less harmful elements, they are friendlier to the environment. And because they are indigenous, they're friendlier to our international reserves. .

* * *

When Cecile Alvarez and I discuss franchising and prospects for small and medium business enterprises in our dzRH Sunday evening programs, we get very good response. Once, when we got Armando Bartolome, president of GMB Franchise Developers Inc., to discuss franchising in RP, we got a call from a taxi driver, telling us that he had to stopped cruising around to listen. Such interest indicates that many Filipinos want to be entrepreneurs. Which is great, as entrepreneurship makes money grow and creates jobs.

There's good news for would-be entrepreneurs. Bartolome, who is often referred to as RP's "franchise guru," has launched two DVDs titled "Learn Franchising" and "Franchise Listings." They are based on his vast experience in giving franchise seminars here and abroad. With the release of the two CDs, Bartolome hopes to reach a wider audience who can learn at home all they need to know about the business they're interested in. The franchise listing offers viewers relevant information about the various companies offering franchises, and how to go about applying for a franchise. Interested parties may call GMB Franchise Developers at 532-8386.

An interesting evening

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

SATURDAY EVENING PROVED TO BE THE proverbial "dark and rainy night," but it was also a most unusual and interesting evening.

It began with an early dinner at the home of Gilda Cordero Fernando, writer-publisher, artist, drama producer, all-around culture vulture and now children's book author. I'd been invited to watch a dress rehearsal of the reading of "Horgle and the King's Soup," which would be the highlight of the launching of Gilda's new book, "Bad Kings" on Thursday, July 27, 5 p.m. at the Podium.

The come-on was the dinner prepared by Gilda's son, Mol, but equally compelling was being in the company of some of the most distinguished personages in the country: National Artist for Literature Virgilio Almario, National Artist for Sculpture Napoleon Abueva, Repertory Philippines stalwart Joy Virata, McCann Erickson chair and civic leader Emily Abrera, stage director Nonon Padilla, culture scholar Manny Chaves, writer Babeth Lolarga and Gilda's daughter, designer Wendy Fernando—all of whom had been inveigled by Gilda into accepting roles in the reading or else take care of the technical side. (Babeth had lugged a Moriones mask all the way from Baguio.)

Other cast members—poet/essayist/editor Krip Yuson, historian and NCCA Chair Ambeth Ocampo, and journalist and Magsaysay awardee Shiela Coronel—could not make it, and before I knew it, I had been drafted as Shiela's stand-in.

It was certainly an experience reading lines dressed as an octopus, but even more unusual was doing so in such distinguished company! Everyone else, I might add, were all likewise clad in outlandish, outsized costumes!

All of which should tell you that "Bad Kings" is an unusual, entertaining book. It consists of four stories (all illustrated by Gilbert Perez and Dennis Espiritu) for various age groups, including repressed adults and "really old ones who love the Philippines."

"Horgle and the King's Soup" was written for Gilda's first-born Bey (and won the Pamana Children's Book Award in 1965). As she tells it, Horgle was born while she and Bey were seated in their carport with their dog at their feet and they spotted a hawk circling the sky. Bey warned Whitey, the dog, whose mouth was open and tongue hanging out, to close his mouth because "if that bird sees you, it might wonder, is that a cave or a mouth and swoop down and enter, and the bird will go down to your stomach and get so frightened in the dark it will flutter its wings, until they come out through either side of your body."

On the way from childhood fancy to short story, however, Horgle transformed into a horse-eagle and into a classic of Philippine juvenile literature!

***

FROM the "Horgle" reading, it was but a short drive to the Newsdesk Café for a poetry reading, consisting mainly of pieces from "Unveiling: Pieces from Bliss," a collection of poetry edited by Aida F. Santos and created by women who all took part in weekend writing workshops led by Santos in her home called "Bliss."

I had been asked to read two poems: "caught in between" by Trisha Andres, and "I am Roused," a new poem by Richie Ybañez. The two pieces, to be modest about it, could not have been more different from "Horgle and the King's Soup." To illustrate, part of Richie's poem goes: *"I feel your fingers/brush against my skin/from the groin/slowly/to my heart/to my breasts/tracing circles/around my nipples."* You get the drift.

Aside from readings from the collection, there were also readings and performances from "The Vagina Monologues," including an audience-participation portion where the audience was asked: "If your vagina could speak, what would it say?"

I said it would say, "I wanna go home!" but there was still another social event waiting.

***

THIS was a dinner at the 9501 Restaurant at the ABS-CBN complex to mark the 45th wedding anniversary of Fred and Florence Tadiar, as well as Florence's 70th birthday. (There! I've just revealed Florence's well-kept secret!)

I'd first met the Tadiar couple 20 years ago, when women's and health groups got together to strategize on ways to do battle with the then-newly installed Cory Aquino administration and its allies in the Church. It had come to our attention that a draft presidential proclamation had just been submitted to Malacañang which would make all forms of contraception illegal, save for the Church-sanctioned natural family planning. Fortunately, Ms Aquino chose not to sign the proclamation, but the newly energized women's health and rights alliance was born in those tumultuous meetings and has not stopped battling the demons of conservatism and religious fanaticism since.

If this sounds woefully familiar to you, that's because the battle is joined anew. The Arroyo administration has declared it a policy to promote natural family planning, at the expense of all other more rational and more effective modern methods. As they say: "The more things change, the more they stay the same."

Anyway, we in the women's movement joined the Tadiars and the Macagbas, as well as their colleagues in the academe, the medical and legal community and their neighbors and friends, in celebrating this lovely couple's union. We were all especially impressed with their six children—Aisha, Carlo, Neferti, Thea, Alfredo Jr. and Gino—all of whom struck us as extraordinarily talented and gifted.

At one point, Alfredo Jr. and Thea, with Thea's husband Richard Everly, told their parents' story in narration and song (Thea and Richard are both stage performers), and the story they told was not only comic and romantic, but touching as well, an entertaining summation of a marriage and a partnership that has weathered the years and the causes.

Here's to more!

Playboy and the mullah

WORLD VIEW

Nathaniel Myers

INDONESIA RECENTLY WITNESSED A PAIR OF dramatic releases: one of a radical Muslim cleric from prison, the other of a saucy men's magazine from its editors. Both Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and Playboy are now out on the streets and in the public eye, but neither is as significant as its opponents claim. Their releases and the public debate to which they have contributed, however, cut straight to the heart of the ongoing struggle for Indonesia's self-identity, a struggle which has taken a dramatic turn of late.

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir is a radical Muslim cleric who was convicted of blessing the 2002 Bali bombing, and suspected by some of providing much more. His name is on a United Nations list of terrorists, and undoubtedly Indonesia and the rest of the world would be safer if he were still in prison.

But his release in itself is not, as some charge, evidence that Indonesia is becoming more radicalized. Ba'asyir was released for the simple reason that the law required it: he had completed his 30-month sentence.

Indonesia's government would undoubtedly prefer to see Ba'asyir languish in jail, but without any legal measure to justify continued detention, it had little option but to release him. Having done so, the government has been quick to impose a travel ban, freeze his bank accounts, and make clear that it will monitor his activities closely. Ba'asyir's release is undeniably unfortunate and possibly dangerous—but it is the consequence of legal proceedings, not any sudden radicalization of Indonesia.

The case of Playboy is a much more accurate barometer of the state of religious radicalism in Indonesia. When Playboy unveiled plans for a nudity-free Indonesian edition early this year, it was denounced by politicians and conservative religious leaders as a threat to traditional values. The national parliament introduced an "Anti-Pornography Bill," which turned out to be a vaguely-worded document with the potential to outlaw not only pornography, but also certain traditional dances, sunbathing and public kissing.

The proposed bill attracted support from moderate Muslim leaders, but its most vocal advocates were a collection of radical religious groups with a predilection for violence, led by the Islamic Defenders Front (known by its Indonesian acronym, FPI). This year alone, these self-appointed moral vigilantes have ransacked bars and nightclubs, attacked the American and Danish embassies, and stoned the offices of Playboy after its first edition—all with only occasional protests from the police. The FPI and its brethren took up the anti-pornography bill with vigor, organizing demonstrations in support and denouncing anyone who dared oppose it.

In the months following Playboy's announcement, the public backlash against the magazine appeared to have pushed the Indonesian mainstream firmly to the right, an impression only furthered by the high visibility and loud belligerence of radical groups. Moderate Muslim activists and intellectuals tried valiantly to counter the radicals, but seemed unable to gain traction.

Late this spring, something changed, and within a few weeks, moderates made dramatic public advances. The most striking demonstration of this political shift came after an incident in central Java, in which a speech by former President Gus Dur was interrupted by FPI members who denounced him for supporting pluralism and opposing the anti-pornography bill.

It was a public attack on a respected national and religious leader, and it was answered quickly by the leaders of the two most important Muslim organizations in the country. Representing a combined membership of more than 60 million Indonesians, they called directly upon the government to act against groups which engage in violence in the name of Islam, and denounced the behavior of such groups as un-Islamic, criminal and a threat to national unity.

Newly emboldened, the government pledged to crackdown on groups that engage in violence, and announced plans to empower authorities to disband organizations that threaten "security and order." The Jakarta police have begun acting with new vigor: they charged one prominent radical leader with defamation for publicly calling women opposed to the anti-pornography bill "evil, wretched, and immoral," and then arrested the chair and 20 members of FPI for attacking a group of cafes.

A national dialogue about fostering pluralism is now in progress, and has inspired renewed public interest in Pancasila, the national philosophy discredited during the Suharto years but now seen by some as a symbol of Indonesia's historic pluralism. Meanwhile, legislators have said they will work to transform the controversial anti-pornography bill into a more targeted anti-smut ordinance. As for the Playboy, it has been met with the expected criticism—but no attacks and, indeed, not even any demonstrations.

In sum, a remarkable shift in the national debate—from how to make Indonesia more conservatively Islamic to how to sustain Indonesia's tradition of religious pluralism into the future—has taken place. The releases of Ba'asyir and publication of Playboy, however controversial, will not themselves alter this new discourse, but they offer an insightful glimpse into just how dramatically things are changing in Indonesia. The moderate agenda has gained important ground this month, but the struggle to establish Indonesia's political and religious identity is far from over.
Project Syndicate

Nathaniel Myers is assistant program officer for Aceh Programs at the Asia Foundation in Jakarta.

There's no carbarn for this yellow cab

YOUNG BLOOD

Chinkai Rosario

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

HER NAME IS FIT FOR A PRINCESS, AND IT WAS MY DAD who gave it to her: Cyress. Loveliness was what she exudes as she roamed tirelessly around the house, showing off her mahogany-colored fur. Being a dachshund, she was a fearless darling, but she could also be cheery, hyperactive and overly playful at the same time, even boisterous and unruly. She was always up and running, barking and whining. And she was alert round the clock: one suspicious screech and she was off to investigate it.

Remembering the night I saw Cyress suddenly fall on her knees still brings a chill to my spine. I saw the helpless look on her face as she started dragging her hind legs. My mom and I were devastated. I could hardly move as my mom and my dad rushed to help her. Cyress couldn't walk straight. She couldn't even stand on her own.

After a brief conversation with the veterinarian, it was confirmed. My mom's greatest fear had happened: Cyress had a slipped disc. She was paralyzed.

People say that when a pet falls ill, it is a selfless act to save his master from harm. Fact or fiction, who knows?

As Cyress was being examined, the veterinarian discovered that aside from the slipped disc, she also had a kidney problem. It was hard for me to accept.

But more than anyone, it was Cyress who was most affected by her ailment. She knew she could no longer interact with other dogs and she plunged into depression.

That roused mom from her own depression. It was time to fight, and she knew she had to be strong to help Cyress.

The treatment was going to be a long process. The veterinarian couldn't assure us that Cyress would recover completely. All we could do was hope.

Cyress takes antibiotics for her kidney and nerves. A special diet has been recommended for her, and she has to undergo therapy at home. With a daily massage, her nerves might be restored, the veterinarian said.

We were determined to help Cyress get back on her feet once again in any way we could. After several visits to the worldwide web, my dad gathered his drawing tools and started putting his design on paper. He wanted to make a wheelchair for Cyress. It was his first crack at designing something and he put his heart into it.

The first wheelchair had two large, tri-color wheels attached to it. It looked too big for Cyress, who is slender and short-legged. The straps were loose and couldn't hold Cyress in place for a long time. The only thing that was okay was its color. My dad painted it a bright yellow, saying it is the symbol of hope. It was a simple reminder for our entire family to keep a positive outlook despite what happened. I called it the "yellow cab."

After carefully studying its structure, and making several revisions, my dad finally came up with one that was a perfect fit for Cyress. This yellow cab has a shorter handle, four smaller wheels attached to the platform where Cyress can rest her hind legs and two crisscrossed straps to support her paralyzed lower body. Now Cyress can explore her surroundings at any time. And the best thing about it is that she looks lovely in it, so carefree and independent.

It's been six months now since the incident and I'm very glad that Cyress is getting better with each passing day. She's responding well to medication. I've seen just how firmly she's holding on to dear life. She is a born fighter. Though she still cannot walk on her own, the yellow cab is just within reach every time she wants to take a short trip somewhere.

Prayers indeed can move mountains. When the thought of giving up is just around the corner, a spark of hope emerges from the darkness. An unwavering faith can overcome storms.

With her medicines and therapy and with my family's overflowing dose of tender loving care, Cyress is slowly regaining her confidence and adapting to the situation. There is no speed limit and no carbarn for her yellow cab. With Cyress courageously struggling to rise from the fall, we are with her until she becomes well again.

Whether that day will come, only time will tell. But I believe that miracles happen. I have seen one and I am hoping for more.

Chinkai Rosario, 22, is a freelance writer.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Wrong focus

"The government wants to sponsor forums and encourages debates on Cha-cha in schools, yet it remains silent and inefficient on the very issues that continue to cripple our education system."
—Kabataan Party vice president Carl Marc Ramota

Priority targets

"All the President has to do is to really send a strong message by going after people very close to her... Maybe a relative, maybe a husband, maybe a brother-in-law."
—Sen. Panfilo Lacson, reacting to the President's allocation of P1 billion more to the anti-graft campaign.

Burying the truth

"I deemed it more fitting to resign in a situation (where) truth is buried under a blurred and vague interpretation of the significant events in the history of our beloved Marine Corps.... Many officers (would) rather suppress the truth just to push some personal agenda."
—Col. Orlando De Leon, explaining why he was resigning as chief of staff of the Marine Corps

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Gov no authority to issue quarry permits

LETTERS TO THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THIS IS A REJOINDER TO THE letter of Ma. Gladys C. Sta. Rita, administrator of Bulacan's provincial government. (PDI, 7/17/06)

• The provincial governor has no authority to issue a quarry permit inside mineral reservations without prior clearance from the secretary of the environment and natural resources.

In the case of the Biak na Bato Mineral Reservation, Proclamation No. 401 clearly states that the reservation, along with the Biak na Bato National Park and Watershed Forest Reserve, shall be under the direct control and administration of the DENR secretary. Sec. 5 of the Philippine Mining Act of 1995 also clearly states that "Mining operations in existing mineral reservations and such other reservations as may thereafter be established, shall be undertaken by the Department or through a contractor." Sec. 15 of the implementing rules and regulations of the Mining Act states that government reservations are closed to mining applications unless prior written clearance by the agency concerned is secured.

* The provincial governor has no authority to issue a quarry permit inside watershed forest reserves, since these areas are closed to mining applications.

The Biak na Bato Watershed Forest Reserve is closed to mining, pursuant to the provisions of Sec. 15.a.2 of the implementing rules and regulations of the Mining Act, to quote:

"The following areas are closed to mining applications: xxx 2. Old growth or virgin forests, proclaimed watershed forest reserves, wilderness areas, mangrove forests, tree parks, xxx."

• The Provincial Mining Regulatory Board or PMRB is a body that is functionally within the jurisdiction of the Office of the Provincial Governor. Its main function is to evaluate and recommend to the governor applications for quarry permit, among other permits that are within the authority of the governor. In effect, while the regional director of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau acts as chair of the board, his actions are all within the direct control and supervision of the provincial governor.

• The cancellation of quarry permits issued by the governor in the Biak na Bato Mineral Reservation and Watershed Forest Reserve is very relevant to the suspension of the quarrying operation of Rosemoor. Gov. Josie de la Cruz must remember that the bigger issue is the impact of all quarrying operations on Biak na Bato. Any quarry permit issued in the area has an impact on Biak na Bato.

• The statement that the governor is authorized to issue environmental compliance certificates (ECCs) pursuant to DENR Adm. Order No. 30, s. 1992 is gravely wrong.

That order devolved the authority to issue ECCs only under Kalakalan 20, a government program that has long been terminated. At the moment, only the President, environment secretary and the Environmental Management Bureau regional director possess the authority to issue ECCs.

—HORACIO C. RAMOS,
director,
Mines and Geosciences Bureau,
North Avenue, Diliman,
Quezon City

Stage for grandstanding, distraction from real problems

THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH penalty in the Philippines just provided the country with a distraction from the real problems it faces—and the President with a stage for pure grandstanding.

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo could not care less who dies.

Of course, she cares about who must live. Some of them are her supporters, like the influential and well-connected Ruben Ecleo Jr., who is accused of multiple murder but who no longer has to worry about the death penalty. People like him will owe Arroyo a big favor that they will have to repay in the future. The icing was the ceremonial presentation to the Pope of a copy of the law abolishing death penalty.

But some controversies refuse to go away. One of these is the presidential election of 2004.

There is strong evidence that her supporters rigged the elections but the Arroyo-controlled Congress will make sure that no impeachment case against her will prosper.

In the military, the officers who tried to do the right thing have been ostracized. Take the case of the officers who were assigned in Lanao del Sur during the 2004 presidential election. They are being treated like parias for "breaking the code of silence."

Meanwhile, media practitioners are being murdered left and right for exposing corruption in the government. The military denies it is responsible for these murders.

Labor militants and leftist activists are also being murdered. The military claims they are being killed by their own comrades in the New People's Army.

Nobody has been punished for these murders. And one thing sure, those responsible for these crimes will not be meted out the death penalty, if and when they ever get arrested.

There is now a Wild West atmosphere in the country: it's not only the military and police who are armed; so are many civilians.

Meanwhile, ordinary Filipinos have to make a living. They will determine what happens to Ms Arroyo and the country in the next few months leading to the 2007 elections. Allegiances and alliances change, so Ms Arroyo is not yet home free.

—ALPHONSE A.C. DEMAIO,
hombresiete@yahoo.ca

Lipa bishop's moral lapse

LIPA CITY ARCHBISHOP RAMON Arguelles lamentably exhibited a moral lapse when he admitted that President Macapagal-Arroyo cheated in the 2004 presidential elections. (PDI, 7/14/06) If Archbishop Arguelles believed that Ms Arroyo cheated, then he should have supported the impeachment complaints against GMA. After all, electoral cheating constitutes a "betrayal of the public trust."

But he added: everybody else cheated [*"Lahat naman nagdaya, eh. Natalo lang yung iba sa dayaan"*]. So that is ground to exculpate the President?

The archbishop has no basis to claim that "all" cheated, for there were certainly those who could not or would not cheat. Indeed the claim that "everyone cheats in an election" is used by GMA's apologists to absolve her from her sin of cheating. Did Manuel Quezon, Sergio Osmeña Jr., Ramon Magsaysay, Carlos Garcia or even GMA's father, Diosdado Macapagal, cheat in the presidential elections? If people cheat, they should be punished, that should be the moral message.

Sadly it appears that Archbishop Arguelles' apology for GMA is the underlying rationale for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' refusal to support the impeachment "unless the process and mindsets of all participating parties are guided by no other motive than genuine concern for the common good." This suggests that only the bishops have "genuine concern for the common good."

Jose Rizal pointed out that the Spanish colonial government in the Philippines, which was supported by the religious authorities then, was not run out of a "genuine concern for the common good" of the native inhabitants of these islands. Let the religious work to strengthen the faith and leave politics to politicians and the voters. Not all politicians are bad, just as not all prelates lack moral integrity.

—MANUEL R ALMARIO,
mfalmario@yahoo.com

GSIS clarifies eCards enrollment issues

THIS IS IN RESPONSE TO THE letter of Cesar Ramos (PDI, 7/18/06) who raised the following issues:

1. The Government Service Insurance System should process/issue pensioners' eCards at its satellite/branch offices for convenience.

2. The GSIS did not make good on its promise to make the eCard operational for withdrawals of monthly pensions from any Megalink connected bank.

Allow us to reply.

On the first issue, the pensioners' enrollment to the eCard is actually the third phase of the roll-out program for this multi-purpose card. This enrollment process was launched in mid-2005 at the GSIS central office. It was replicated in GSIS field offices in January 2006. It was designed in a way that pensioners can only enroll for their eCards at their servicing GSIS offices. Thus, for instance, pensioners receiving their pensions from the GSIS Quezon City Field Office can only enroll for their eCards in that office.

If a pensioner has moved to a locality outside the coverage of his original servicing GSIS office, he/she may request a change of servicing office—that which has jurisdiction over the town or city where he/she now resides. Once the transfer is effected, the pensioner can enroll for eCard in his/her new servicing GSIS office.

Likewise, in gathering pensioner-related data for the eCard, there are several things that are considered—not only the need to transfer the computer equipment but also the number of pensioners who have to be serviced. Enrollment centers are put up in the GSIS office premises to allow the access to as many pensioners as possible. If Ramos can point to us the satellite office he has in mind, we can check on the number of pensioners in the area and, if warranted, we can recommend adopting his suggestion.

On the second issue, from the start of the enrollment process, pensioners are advised by the GSIS that they will continue receiving their pension checks by mail, up to the time their eCards shall have been released to them and until such time they shall have been notified as to when the eCard crediting will be fully operational for pensioners. The GSIS never promised that the monthly pensions will immediately be credited to the pensioners' eCard accounts. We are aware that the electronic crediting of pensions and loans to pensioners will start in January 2007 yet.

Bank representatives, however, did mention that with the eCard's issuance, individual savings accounts are automatically created for the enrolling pensioners, which they can then use for their own transactions—such as making deposits to their savings account and/or withdrawing their personal funds via ATMs.

We also take note of Ramos' concern on the personal appearance required of pensioners during their birth month, but we would like to underscore that this procedure is a monitoring mechanism to check on the status of our pensioners.

—ENRIQUETA P. DISUANCO,
EVP-operations,
Government Service Insurance System

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HUWAG ISUGAL ANG PILIPINAS
SA WTO negotiations!

WALA TAYONG LABAN
SA MADAYANG KALAKALAN!

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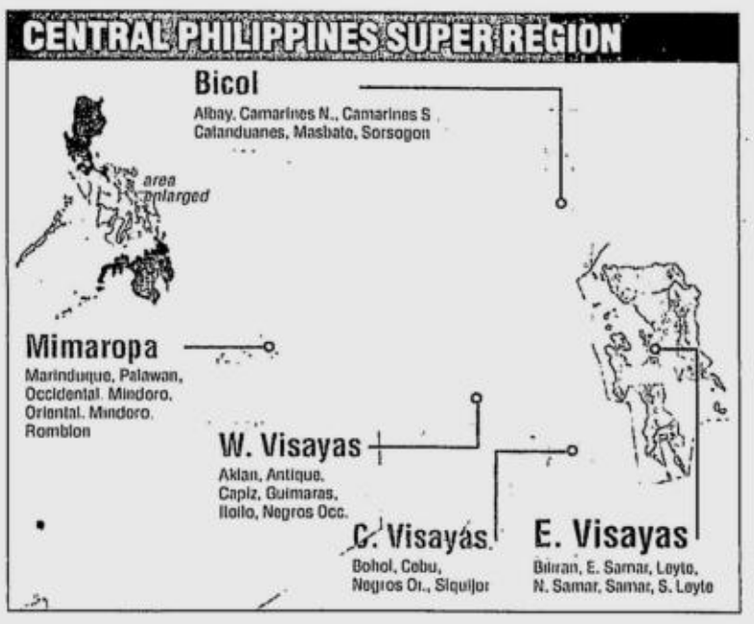
E. Visayas needs ₱60B for 'super region' plan



By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—EASTERN VISAYAS needs about P60 billion to implement all the local projects identified under the "super regions" program of the national government, according to the National Economic and Development Authority.

The bulk of the amount will be used in geothermal power exploration in Southern Leyte and Biliran, as well as the rehabilitation of the Daniel Z. Romualdez (DZR) Airport here, said Buenaventura Go-Soco, Neda regional chief.

Southern Leyte Gov. Rosette Lerias has proposed a P19-billion funding for the exploration and development of geothermal power in San Juan town. The project could generate about 50 megawatts of electricity.

Biliran Gov. Rogelio Espina sought a funding of P2 billion to P3 billion to explore the potential geothermal power source in Caibiran town, which had a potential capacity of 20 megawatts.

About P3.1 billion is needed for the improvement of the DZR Airport, the region's premier airport. "Minor" airports in Ormoc City in Leyte, Calbayog City in Samar, and Guiuan in Eastern Samar will be developed at a cost of more than P150 million.

The rest of the P60-billion proposed budget will be used to upgrade national roads, highways and bridges, including a 2-km viaduct in Sogod town in Southern Leyte worth about P800 million.

Eastern Visayas is among the five regions included in Central Philippines, one of the four "super regions" envisioned by President Macapagal-Arroyo. The other regions of Central Philippines are Western Visayas, Central Visayas, Bicol and Mimaropa (Mindoro-Marinduque-Romblon-Palawan.

Go-Soco, whose office collated all the project proposals submitted by the six governors of Eastern Visayas, said the provincial executives were optimistic that all the projects would be implemented.

The projects are "doable" and can help spur regional development, Lerias said. One of the most depressed regions in the country, Eastern Visayas is composed of Leyte, Southern Leyte, Biliran, Samar, Eastern Samar and Northern Samar.

Go-Soco said it would be up to the governors to follow up their proposed projects with the President.

"Or they can approach a particular member of Cabinet or their congressmen and ask for support," he said.

The Neda official noted "a feeling among governors that some provinces would be getting a bigger pie."

Leyte Gov. Jericho Petilla, in an earlier radio interview, had aired apprehension that Eastern Visayas could be left behind other developed regions in the Visayas, where some provinces appeared to have bigger fund allocations. He did not elaborate.

Head of nurse group linked to test leaks

BAGUIO CITY—NURSING SCHOOLS HERE have asked the Philippine Nurses Association (PNA) to sanction its president for obstructing an exposé of the cheating that marred the June 11 and 12 licensure examinations for nurses.

The deans of the Saint Louis University (SLU) College of Nursing and the Easter College School of Nursing accused George Cordero, PNA president, of attempting to suppress a report about alleged test leakages that attended the examinations administered by the Professional Regulatory Commission (PRC).

Ninety-one examinees have demanded the suspension of the Board of Nursing members and the delay in the release of the June 11 and 12 test results until an independent fact-finding body investigates the cheating.

Easter College Dean Ruth Tingba, who is a PNA governor, and SLU Dean Maria Grace Lacanaria, who is chapter president of the Association of Deans of Philippine Colleges of Nursing (ADCN), are also suing Cordero today (July 25, Tuesday) at the Baguio courts for obstruction of justice because, they said, his telephone calls suggested that he was a participant in a cover up.

Lacanaria said she received telephone calls from Cordero urging her to clamp down on the scandal purportedly to avoid destabilizing negotiations with the American National Council of State Boards of Nursing for a Philippine testing center that will offer migrating nurses the United States National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEx).

The INQUIRER learned the deans have since received digital copies of reports that "directly implicate Cordero in an industry-wide whitewash."

The leakages were first exposed when the Baguio complainants saw photocopies of an 18-page document that contained handwritten test questions and answers.

The copies belonged to nursing licensure applicants, who wore uniform jackets of the R.A. Gapuz Review Center. These applicants had shared their copies with some examinees, who then alerted Norenia Dao-ayen, PNA Baguio president and former nursing school dean of the University of the Cordilleras.

The PRC said it traced the leakages to two members of the nursing board but only recommended that they be charged with gross negligence.

In the PRC fact-finding report, a suspect claimed she lost her test questions when she had them photocopied in Manila, while another suspect claimed that her test questions were stolen.

A final set of test questions is drafted based on their contributions. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Church protest ignored as STL gets go signal

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—THE CITY COUNCIL has given the go-signal for the operation of Small Town Lottery (STL) amid opposition from the Catholic Church.

In a resolution passed during its regular session last week, the council said the public hearings conducted last month showed that the majority of those who attended were in favor of the operation of the numbers game.

It cited the report of the committee on games, amusement and professional sports, chaired by Councilor Armand Parcon, that conducted public hearings on June 19, 20, 29 and 30. The hearings were attended by barangay officials, residents, representatives from transport organizations, the academe and religious groups, and professionals.

The resolution, authored by Councilor Eduardo Peñaredondo, said the STL "can bring benefits" to the city that would be impossible "if the game is operating clandestinely or illegally."

The council supported the committee report pointing out that the STL operation could provide employment to agents and employees, regulate betting, and protect bettors.

It would also provide revenues for the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), Bureau of Internal Revenue, and the city government, the council said in its resolution.

Under PCSO rules, 10 percent of the net sales will go to the city or municipality, 5 percent to the province, 2.5 percent to the district, 5 percent to Philippine National Police, 7.5 percent to the PCSO, and 15 percent as operating funds.

The resolution endorsed to the PCSO the application of Iloilo Small Town Lottery and Gaming Corp. (ISTLGC) and other applicants to operate the STL.

A resolution from local government unit favoring the STL is required by the PCSO in granting permission to corporations to operate the game in a locality.

The city government granted a business permit to ISTLGC on May 3. Another group, Green Diamond Multi Ventures Corp. is applying to operate the STL in the city, but the PCSO allows only one corporation to operate in a trial run in an area.

Mayor Jerry Treñas said he would support the stand of the city council.

Gov. Niel Tupas Sr. earlier said he would oppose and block the entry of STL in the province. Iloilo has 42 towns and one city.

Tupas had said he did not "share government propaganda that the STL will eradicate the illegal numbers game.

"Allowing the STL to operate will only erode the moral values of the people, and teach them to entrust their future to luck instead of working hard to earn a livelihood," Tupas said in a letter to the Jaro Archdiocese.

The Archdiocese of Jaro headed by Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, is opposing the STL operation.

"If the government cannot even curb illegal gambling, how well can we trust it to find solution to widespread corruption?" read a statement issued earlier by more than 140 priests of the archdiocese.

"Is the government telling us that the best way to solve this problem is to make it legal? If the government cannot provide its people with a more decent and productive lifestyle, then something must be wrong with its leadership!"

RAINY CHORE
Farmers take advantage of the rainy season to plant their main crop, rice, in lowland and non-irrigated farms in Asingan, Pangasinan.
TOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

DILG chief Puno sacks 2 ARMM Napolcom execs

COTABATO CITY—INTERIOR Secretary Ronaldo Puno ordered the dismissal from the government service of two officials of the National Police Commission (Napolcom) in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) for their involvement in misappropriation of funds.

Puno, also Napolcom chief, ordered the dismissal of Jamiri Maridul, administrative officer IV, and budget officer III Samad Balabagan after a hearing on the administrative charges.

A few years ago, employees of the Napolcom-ARMM accused Maridul, Balabagan, administrative Officer V Marylou Lesondra and cashier Iris Yvonne Mae Go of pocketing P314,000 in government funds.

The Napolcom's Inspection, Monitoring and Investigation Service, after verifying the complaint, recommended the creation of an ad hoc committee to investigate the case.

The investigation took several years to complete.

Imelda Roces, Napolcom vice chair and executive officer, said in statement Saturday that the filing of an administrative case against the officials was not only based on the complaint but was also based on facts brought about by the investigation.

She said after a judicial evaluation of the case records, the Napolcom *en banc* agreed with the findings of the ad hoc committee, who found the four Napolcom officers guilty of dishonesty.

Roces said dishonesty is considered a grave offense and punishable by dismissal from the service on first offense.

"The Napolcom *en banc* ruled that the case against the said respondents was substantially proven in the formal investigation when they admitted that they participated either by signing, receiving or releasing of funds without the appropriate legal authority and supporting documents thereby negating their claim of regularity in the performance of duty and good faith," she said.

Explaining why only two of the officials were ordered dismissed, Roces said the case against Lesondra has become moot and academic because she was already terminated from the government service in 1998 by the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

"The commission has lost jurisdiction over respondent Go since she has already transferred to the Kidapawan Registry of Deeds on June 16, 1998," Roces said. *Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

15 hurt in NPA land mine blast in Surigao Sur

By Bert Pacate
PDI Mindanao Bureau

TANDAG, SURIGAO DEL SUR—The war on communist guerrillas by the Arroyo administration got expected support from an anti-communist group just as the guerrillas continued their attacks on government targets, but wounded 15 civilians when two land mines they planted exploded on a highway in a village in Tago, this province.

Pastor Alcover Jr., head of the anti-communist group Alliance for Nationalism and Democracy (Anad), said in a statement that Executive Order No. 546 issued by President Macapagal-Arroyo last week was a step "in the right direction."

Alcover issued the statement as 15 persons were wounded when two land mines planted by communist rebels exploded on the highway in Unidos Village in Tago.

Army Lt. Mike Tanggote, spokesperson of the 58th Infantry Battalion based in Tandag, said five of the wounded were passengers of a jeep that was passing by when the mines blew up.

The rest of the victims were walking, Tanggote said.

An NPA spokesperson, who identified herself as Maria Malaya, apologized for the injuries in a phone interview. She said the rebels who detonated the mines mistook the jeepney for a military vehicle.

The victims were brought to the Adela Serra Ty Memorial Hospital for treatment.

In his statement, Alcover said Ms Arroyo's issuance of EO 546, which expands the role of the PNP and the local governments in the campaign against communist guerrillas, spelled out the government's "wholistic approach" in decisively dealing with the insurgency.

Cagayan cop chief denies brod's role in 'jueteng'

ILAGAN, ISABELA—THE POLICE chief in Cagayan Valley has denied police reports linking his brother to "jueteng" operations in Cagayan and Quirino.

Chief Supt. Jefferson Soriano called the reports malicious, saying it would be improper for him to allow his brother, Danny, to engage in illegal gambling because of his position as police director in the region.

"Why are they maliciously dragging the name of my brother [into jueteng operations]? Where is my *delicadeza* if I would allow such acts in the area where I am the regional police director?" said Soriano.

Danny Soriano's name was included in the Philippine National Police (PNP) list of suspected jueteng operators in the region.

Soriano suspected that his detractors had been peddling such stories to discredit him and drive him out of his post.

Senior Supt. James Andres Melad, Cagayan police director, said Danny and the late Cagayan Rep. Rodolfo Aguinaldo used to operate the government-supported Small Town Lottery in the province in the 1990s.

Melad said his information showed that Danny had not been involved in any venture after handling the STL franchise.

Melad said jueteng financiers, who operate guerrilla-type operations in the province, came from other regions. He said he had ordered his men to monitor illegal gambling activities and arrest those involved.

Isabela Bishop Sergio Utleg said he opposed all forms of gambling activities in his province.

Utleg said the priests in the Diocese of Ilagan, which covers 35 towns and two cities, would continue to use the pulpit to fight jueteng and illegal gambling. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Squatters invade DA research facilities

THE NEED for space by an ever growing population is eating up research facilities for farming in the Cordillera, where a rice paddy in Bontoc, Mt. Province is still tilled by traditional methods.
EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

BAGUIO CITY—THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture has accused the Department of Agrarian Reform and an attached ancestral land titling agency of supporting squatters who have "invaded" state research farms in the city and in two Cordillera provinces.

The accusation was documented in a report to President Macapagal-Arroyo that was discussed by Cabinet officials during a Regional Development Council (RDC) meeting here on Tuesday.

The DA said officials of the DAR and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) had provided the squatters the resources to process their claims over the Baguio dairy farm and research facilities in Sagada, Mountain Province, and in Luna, Apayao.

They asked the Cabinet to stop the DAR and the NCIP from processing private claims over government reservations "in the interest of public service."

Agrarian Undersecretary Narciso Nieto, NCIP Legal Bureau Director Basilio Wandag, and the Cordillera RDC have suggested forming a management team to decide on the fate of these facilities.

The team will be composed of Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban, Agrarian Secretary Nasser Pangandaman, NCIP Chair Janet Serrano, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and local officials.

The dairy farm and the facilities in Apayao and Mountain Province serve as livestock breeding centers and dairy marketing outlets.

The farm, which supplies fresh milk to city residents, was at the center of a jurisdictional dispute among the DA, DAR and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the 1990s when a DAR adjudicator ordered Ibaloi claimants to take over parts of the property under the agrarian reform law.

After extensive litigation, the DAR withdrew the decision. But the NCIP began processing the claims of the Ibaloi heirs of Ikang Paus, Quilio and old Ibaloi patriarchs Mateo Cariño and Mateo Carantes over the dairy farm in 2001.

Backed by NCIP injunctions against the DA, the Ibaloi claimants were allowed to build structures, cultivate land and excavate—activities that exposed the greater portion of the property to soil erosion.

Mayor Braulio Yaranon said he wanted a clear policy on the dairy farm because he had been "demolishing squatter houses there at the behest of DA."

"If we really intend to give it to them anyway, we might as well do it in an orderly fashion," he said.

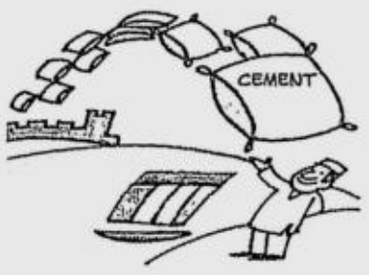
Wandag defended the Ibaloi claims, saying the law allowed them the right to stake old ancestral properties. He said the NCIP released 44 certificates of ancestral land titles (CALTs) last year, approved 18 more CALTs this year, as well as the certificate of ancestral domain title for Ibaloi and Kankaney peoples in Barangay Happy Hallow inside the John Hay reservation. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

ARMM plebiscites

COTABATO CITY—The Commission on Elections will hold plebiscites in Maguindanao and Tawi-Tawi following the passage of two regional legislative measures creating two towns in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. ARMM Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan, who recently signed into law two sets of Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act creating Datu Blah Sinsuat town in Maguindanao and Sibuto town in Tawi-Tawi, said the people in the affected areas would decide when the plebiscites will be held. *Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Cement from China



PARANG, Maguindanao—The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao has imported 125,000 bags of cement from China to augment its infrastructure program needs, Ishak Mastura, regional trade secretary said. Mastura said the importation has brought down the local retail price of cement from P185 per 40-kilo bag to P170. ARMM Gov. Zaldy Uy Ampatuan said the shipment was a test-run on the zero-percent import tariff rates that the region was offering to direct importers under its economic zone law. *Nash Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Massacre suspect tagged

BUTUAN CITY—Police have identified a suspect in the killing of three family members in La Paz, Agusan del Sur last week. Chief Supt. Geary Barias, Caraga police chief, said that the suspect, Salvo Nautan, had yet to be arrested. On July 18, a man wielding a machete barged into the house of the Birino family while they were having dinner in Panagangan Village, killing Claire Birino, who was four-months pregnant, and her children Princess, 3, and Chamberlain, 1. The woman's husband, Carlos, narrowly survived and told police that he and Nautan had a land dispute. *Franklin Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Pneumonia top killer

COTABATO CITY—Pneumonia is the leading cause of death among patients in the government-run Cotabato Regional and Medical Center (CRMC) here during the first six months. Dr. Arladne Silongan, CRMC chief, said the disease killed 56 of the 624 admissions from January to June. Silongan said most of the cases were already in an advanced stage. Another common ailment, diarrhea, brought in 312 patients, she said. *Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

2 killed in road accidents

BAGUIO CITY—Two persons were killed while 23 others were hurt in separate vehicular accidents in Benguet on Friday. Reports from the Office of Civil Defense in the Cordillera said a jeepney fell into a 100-meter ravine in Barangay Alno in La Trinidad town, killing Vilma Toribio, 13, and injuring 20 other passengers. Reports said faulty brakes caused the driver to lose control of the vehicle. In Tuba town, rocks falling from the mountain hit a Kia Ceres truck along the Barangay Badiwan section of the Marcos Highway at 8:20 p.m. The driver lost control of the truck, causing it to swerve and fall into a 100-meter ravine. Denny Gamboa, 37, of Dagupan City, was killed while three others were hurt. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

City police chief axed

CAUAYAN CITY—The police provincial director has relieved the city police chief after communist rebels raided a police substation in Barangay Maligaya on Friday and took off with four firearms. Senior Supt. Jude Santos, acting Isabela police director, said he relieved Supt. Antonio Taylan when his men failed to prevent the attack staged by at least 30 New People's Army rebels. Santos said Taylan had failed to institute measures to protect the substation. Reports said only one policeman was manning the station when the rebels struck at past 4 p.m. The rebels took two M-16 and two M-14 rifles, radio communication sets and documents. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI N. L. Bureau*

Injured dolphins rescued

CEBU CITY—An injured female dolphin was rescued by four young shell gatherers at around 7 p.m. on Thursday along the shore of Sitio Cayam, Colon, Naga, 21 km south of here. The 6-foot, 50-kilo dolphin was secured at the Salcon Power Corp. wharf overnight and released back to the sea at past 7 a.m. the next day. An hour later, residents in the adjoining town of Minglanilla found another injured dolphin, measuring 9 feet in length, stranded at Palm Beach in Barangay Tungkop.
Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau

'Great PR speech but where will money ...

From page A1

said. "Our new tax laws can only raise about P80 billion a year."

Ms Arroyo's allies praised her speech. House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles's comment was representative:

"The road map-geographic speech has provided us with the correct economic directions in detail. As a congressman from Mindanao, we are specially favored as the super region for agriculture and food basket of the republic. Let the people feel the economy recovering and not divisive political bickering. The message is clear and it's time to move forward and leave the past behind."

Business leaders expressed guarded optimism.

A proadministration businessman hailed the President's political acumen for laying down the long list of infrastructure projects.

"What was beautiful about [her speech] was that [it showed] that she's either a master politician or a good economist," said Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry chair emeritus Sergio Ortiz-Luis.

She'll get votes at local level

Ortiz-Luis said the President could now count on the solid support of voters at the local level—and consequently of heads of local government units—after her project-laden the speech less than a year before the mid-term elections.

"How can her candidate lose at the local level, especially if these projects come through?" said Ortiz-Luis, who also heads the Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc. "These will mean jobs for everyone there."

Overall, he said he was pleased with Ms Arroyo's speech, calling it "one of the best Sonas I've heard."

"What people are saying is that there is no trickle-down effect [at present]," he said, referring to the opposition's criticism of the Arroyo administration's economic programs. "But if she manages to implement only one-half of what she promised here, it would be fantastic."

Ortiz-Luis also hailed the fact that Ms Arroyo's address was "very specific and measurable."

Wait and see

The influential Makati Business Club (MBC) said it preferred to see whether the President would be able to deliver.

"It's a long list of items so we'll watch and wait if these promises to become a reality," said Guillermo Luz, executive director of the umbrella organization of the country's largest business groups.

In general, Luz welcomed the President's plans although he questioned the administration's proposal to create "super regions" from the country's 14 existing administrative regions.

"I have trouble accepting the concept of the super region," he said. "I don't understand the rationale for it."

Legitimacy

Luz, who along with the MBC was active in the anti-Arroyo campaign last year, acknowledged that some businessmen were now less interested in politics and more interested in "moving on."

"Some people are saying, 'Let's move on.' Some are saying we can't move on until some issues are resolved. A third group is saying it's OK to move on if you resolve the remaining issues," he said, referring to prevailing doubts about the legitimacy of Ms Arroyo's presidency. "I identify with the third group."

Luz said it would be difficult to move forward with an aggressive economic plan while outstanding issues of legitimacy remained.

The foreign business community was similarly impressed but urged that the government act on Ms Arroyo's plans immediately.

"It would be fantastic if she could implement it, but they have to act immediately, because it just takes so long here," said Robert Sears, executive director of the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc.

Sears said foreign businessmen would be willing to risk their money locally if they saw that the government was serious about "getting its act together."

If she walks the talk ...

"If the foreign businesses see this, if they see that she walks the talk, they'll step up to the plate," Sears said.

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Teodoro Casiño criticized Ms Arroyo for praising Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, the Army regional commander accused of human rights abuses and political killings.

"It was revealing that she condemned the killings right after praising her most notorious general. I think that reveals the double talk that she is fond of using. It shows that this was a fake condemnation. It lacked sincerity and even sensitivity for the victims," Casiño said.

In Baguio City, Patricio Annayo, agribusiness chief in the Cordillera, said developing northern Luzon as an agribusiness quadrangle could start by developing idle lands for agroforestry and intensifying the production of high-value crops like Arabica coffee, citrus fruits and vegetables like potatoes and cabbages.

"These products have been listed as priorities of the Regional Development Council," he said.

Geography lesson

In Pangasinan, Archbishop Oscar Cruz said Ms Arroyo's speech was a "good geography lesson."

"It was also a great public relations speech and good for a 'Wish ko Lang' (TV show) episode," he said.

In Pampanga, Raymundo Ruedas, a driver, said the focus on the regions replacing imperial Manila was "good" because "it would bring a good life to the people in the provinces."

With reports from Ronnel W. Domingo, Michael Lim Ubac and TJ Burgonio in Manila; Marlon Ramos, Ephraim Aguilar, Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Madonna Virola and Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Delmar Cariño, Melvin Gascon, Villamor Visaya Jr. and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; and Tonette Orejas and Cesar Villa, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Villar now leads 'chop suey' ...

From page A1

Sen. Joker Arroyo, who considers himself an independent senator, described the setup as "chop suey."

Traditionally, senators who voted for a losing candidate for the Senate presidency became the opposition, and those who supported the winning candidate the majority.

No challenge

No one challenged Villar yesterday for the top Senate post. The unusual arrangement came about because of the gentleman's agreement that Franklin Drilon and Villar forged in 2004.

Under the deal, Drilon would serve as Senate president for two years from July 2004 to July 2006 after which Villar would serve for one year.

In his acceptance speech, the 57-year-old former Speaker and housing magnate defined the Senate as "independent but not adversarial" to Malacañang. His message to Malacañang was: "*Walang personalan, trabaho lang* (Nothing personal, it's just a job)."

The mix of pro- and anti-Arroyo senators in the majority that elected Villar by acclamation brought confusion to the legislators who asked if such a majority could be considered administration or opposition.

Osmeña no-show

Members of the minority who gave their assent to Villar's nomination were Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Senators Lusia "Loi" Ejercito and her son Jinggoy Estrada, Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, Alfredo Lim and Jamby Madrigal.

Sen. Sergio Osmeña III was a no-show at the opening ceremonies.

Lacson took to the floor to ask for the determination of those with the majority and those with the minority.

He quipped that the aisle separating the majority (who are on the left side of the session hall) and the minority should be removed for lack of distinction between those who are for and against the administration.

Before yesterday's election, the 23-member Senate had 16 majority and eight minority senators.

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan moved to defer the answer to Lacson's question.

Mutant majority

Pangilinan, who had withdrawn support from President Macapagal-Arroyo, said the new Senate composition should be simply called independent.

But administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said the chamber was now dominated by a "mutant majority."

"Thus, the new Senate majority is an aberration at birth. If it were a car, it would be a hybrid. If it were a horse, it would be a piebald. Wonders never cease in politics. What we are seeing is the art of the political deal," Santiago said.

Santiago said Villar would be held hostage by his opposition backers.

While they had thrown their support behind Villar, Ejercito and Jinggoy Estrada maintained they were not breaking away from the opposition.

"I signed the resolution in support of the gentleman's agreement," the younger Estrada said, referring to the term-sharing agreement between Drilon and Villar.

"But it doesn't mean that I'm abandoning the opposition and my quest for truth and justice against the illegitimate government of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo."

Senator Ejercito said: "I and my son, Senator Jinggoy, will never align ourselves with this administration. We will remain with the opposition until Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's downfall."

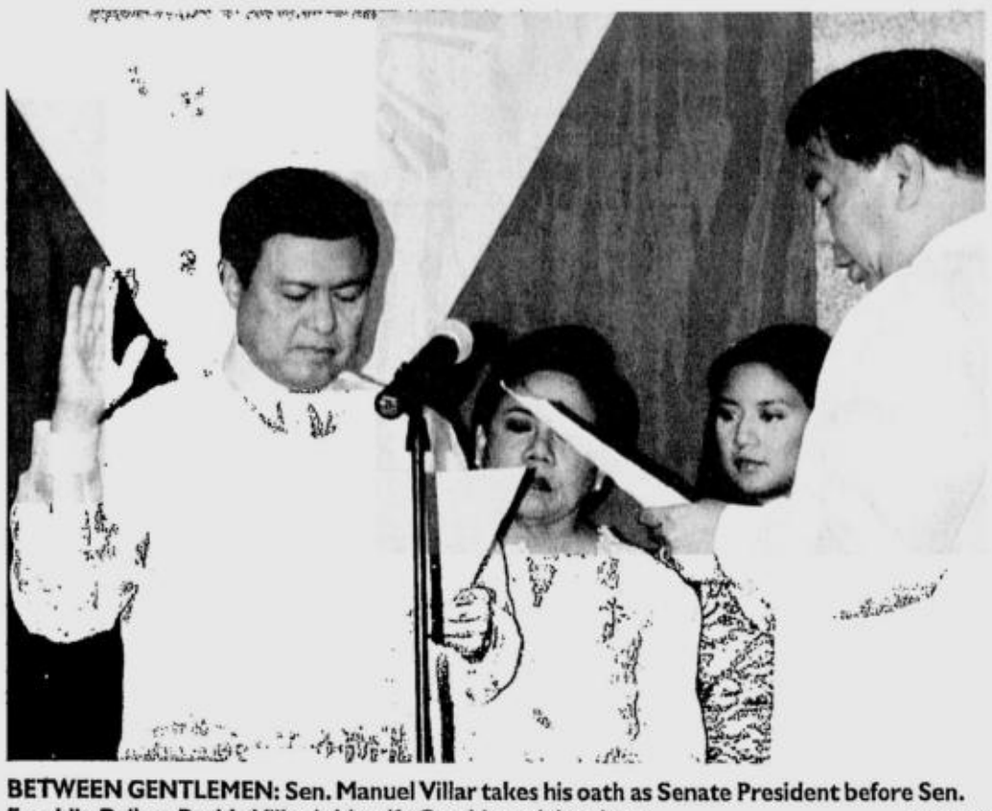
Mother and son said they had "complete trust and confidence" that Villar would keep his vow to maintain the chamber's independence from Malacañang.

But the younger Estrada warned: "Once this representation has seen that the independence from Malacañang is being compromised, then I will not hesitate to immediately withdraw my support for Senator Villar."

Forgiven

By asking his wife and son to support Villar's bid for the Senate presidency, former President Estrada has forgiven Villar for his key role in his impeachment in 2000.

"Yes, he has forgiven Manny Villar," Senator Ejercito said in an interview at the packed session hall after the opening ceremonies.



BETWEEN GENTLEMEN: Sen. Manuel Villar takes his oath as Senate President before Sen. Franklin Drilon. Beside Villar is his wife Cynthia and daughter. JESS YUSON

"He (Estrada) has a big heart; there's no more rancor in his heart."

As Speaker, Villar played a key role in the quick transmittal to the Senate of the articles of impeachment against then President Estrada in 2000.

Ejercito said she was surprised when the former President told her and Jinggoy they should support Villar, who had often visited the elder Estrada at his rest house in Tanay, Rizal, in the run-up to the opening of Congress.

While the impeachment proceedings were aborted, the elder Estrada, who faces corruption and other charges, was eventually ousted in January 2001 by a military-backed people's revolt, detained and then charged with plunder.

Undefined alliances

Pimentel said the voting by acclamation was done for a purpose.

"The voting was precisely by acclamation so there would be no need to define alliances," Pimentel said. He said he expected the Estradas and Lim to stay with the minority.

Villar told reporters he did not consider the Senate majority as being aligned with the administration.

"I don't think this can be called administration because it may turn out that there are more opposition in the Senate. So this is the Senate majority. We're supposed to be an independent body. We don't care about the President," Villar said.

Gentleman's pact

Before the Senate adjourned its session on June 8, Drilon vowed to honor his gentleman's agreement in 2004 with Villar to yield the Senate leadership at the opening of the regular session of Congress yesterday.

Just to be sure, Villar passed around a resolution to back his bid, and got 14 signatures although resolution was not presented to the session or to the media.

At the start of yesterday's session, Drilon announced that he was "relinquishing the post of Senate President." Pangilinan moved that Drilon's resignation be "acted upon accordingly," then asked for the election of a successor.

Drilon then descended the Senate rostrum, which had graced for more than five years and went down to the floor to nominate Villar, citing him for his "competence, efficiency, diligence and strong determination to succeed."

"With his indomitable and audacious spirit, he successfully conquered the world of business and politics," Drilon said.

Housing industry

He noted that Villar had carved a niche in the business sector, earning the title of "dean of the Philippine housing industry" for having built more than 100,000 houses for poor and middle-class families.

"Entrepreneur, housing innovator, lawmaker, friend, husband to Cynthia and father (to three children)—whatever role he plays in his life, Sen. Manuel Villar consistently strives for excellence," Drilon said.

"I have the pleasure of nominating Mr. Sipag at Tiyaga," he said, using Villar's campaign monicker.

Administration Sen. Pia Cayetano and the Estradas seconded the nomination.

Cayetano said Villar was the best person to succeed Drilon and he was expected to "ensure that the checks and balances that make a democracy work and the basic fundamental rights and freedoms of our people will not be trampled upon."

Senate President Pro Tempore Juan Flavier declared Villar elected after hearing no objections.

Villar only entered the session hall after three colleagues formally fetched him from the executive lounge after his election.

Drilon administered the oath in the presence of Villar's wife, Las Piñas City Rep. Cynthia Villar, and children Paolo, Mark and Camille.

Oversight role

In his speech, Villar defended the Senate against those who he said considered the chamber's investigations and positions a "specter of obstruction."

"My distinguished predecessors as Senate President had unequivocally upheld the Senate's tradition of independence. My leadership shall remain faithful to this noble tradition," Villar said.

He said the Senate must not be unmindful of the concerns of the other branches with which it should have a constructive collaboration.

"However, let it not be said that this attitude of cooperation means an abdication of our traditional oversight role," he said.

Villar said the Senate should keep its relevance by addressing urgent problems such as poverty, terrorism, high pump prices of oil, big population growth, dropping educational standards, and unemployment that is driving millions of Filipinos abroad.

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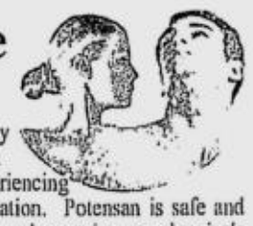

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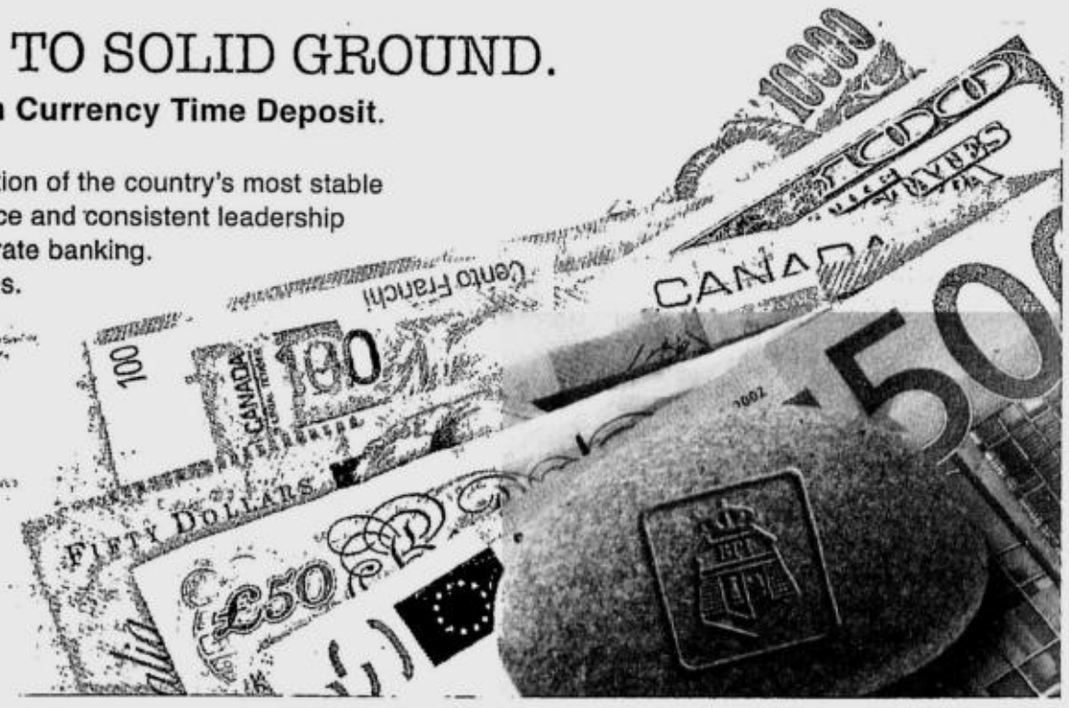

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Puerto Rican is Miss Universe

Miss Philippines is chosen most photogenic

MISS PUERTO Rico Zuleyka Rivera enters the stage during the swimsuit competition of the Miss Universe pageant in Los Angeles on Sunday. AFP

LOS ANGELES—AN 18-YEAR-OLD ASPIRING ACTRESS from Puerto Rico who hopes to someday star in US and Latin American films has been crowned Miss Universe 2006.

Zuleyka Rivera Mendoza shared a nervous emotional hug with the first runner-up, Kurara Chibana of Japan, moments before the winner was announced, then clasped her hands to her mouth in amazement as her name was called Sunday night.

Rivera beamed as the crown was placed on her head but briefly fainted after a post-pageant news conference. She quickly recovered after being given liquids, according to Miss Universe spokesperson Esther Swan.

Rivera, who was wearing a dress made entirely of metal chains, had been standing under hot stage lights for some time when she began to topple over. Someone caught her as she fell.

"I always had faith and confidence in myself, but I never knew I was going to win," Rivera, speaking in Spanish from the stage, said in her first remarks as Miss Universe.

The winner, who is from Salinas on the Caribbean Island's southern coast, said she would continue the pageant's mission of promoting awareness and education about AIDS and HIV.

"I want to tell those people there are always problems in life, but there are always possibilities to improve things," she said.

Also finishing in the top five were second runner-up Lauriane Gillieron of Switzerland, third runner-up Lourdes Arevalos of Paraguay, and fourth runner-up Tara Conner of the United States.

RP contestant

Lia Andrea Ramos of Philippines was chosen most photogenic in an online vote by the public. Angela Asare of Ghana won the congeniality award in a vote by all 86 contestants. Chibana, who carried the impressive looking Samurai sword, won the award for best national costume.

"They were probably afraid not to pick Miss Japan or she would use that sword," quipped Carson Kressley of TV's "Queer Eye," who provided commentary along with 2004 Miss USA Shandi Finnessey. Opera singer Vittorio Grigolo and Latin singer Chelo provided musical performances.

In her pageant biography, Rivera explained what made her different from the other contestants.

"Physically, I have been told by modeling agencies and friends that I represent the consummate Latino look," she said. "Everything in my face expresses our heritage, our music and the wonderful mixes of races that we are."

In her spare time, Rivera said she liked watching the Latino version of "American Idol" and meditating. She hopes one day to act in US and Latin American movies.

Rivera is the fifth winner from the US territory in the pageant's 55-year history. Her compatriot, Denise Quiñones, won the title in 2001. *AP*

'Jueteng' movie bags 4 awards in Indian filmfest

By Marinel R. Cruz
Entertainment

JEFFREY JETURIAN'S "KUBRADOR," A digital film that chronicles three days in the life of a "jueteng" collector, bagged four of the five major awards in this year's Osian Cinefan Festival of Asian Cinema held last week in New Delhi, India.

"Kubrador," or "The Bet Collector," won Best Film, Best Director for Jeturian and Best Actress for Gina Pareño.

The movie also won its second International Federation of Film Critics (Fipresci) jury prize; the first was from the Moscow International Film Festival earlier this month.

"No award was handed out for Best Actor because the jury did not think anyone deserved it," Jeturian said in a text message he sent to the INQUIRER on Sunday night, right after the awards rites.

Jeturian added: "Indonesian actress Jajang Noer (jury head) told me at the dinner after-party that Fons Deza (who played Gina's husband) was considered for Best Actor, but that the jury had deemed his role too short. Had he won, we would've swept all the main awards."

As Best Actress winner, Pareño was cited "for her fully involved and emphatic portrayal."

Jeturian recounted that Pareño, wearing a resplendent black sari—charmed the audience by delivering her acceptance speech in Hindi.

In 2004, another Filipina, Katherine Luna, won Best Actress in this same festival, for Mario O' Hara's "Babae sa Breakwater."

"Kubrador" was singled out for "its remarkable understanding and credible portrayal of life in a Manila slum and the totality of its accomplishment in terms of excellent teamwork and the *mise en scene* realized by the director."

It is the first Filipino movie to win the Best Film Award in the festival's eight-year history.

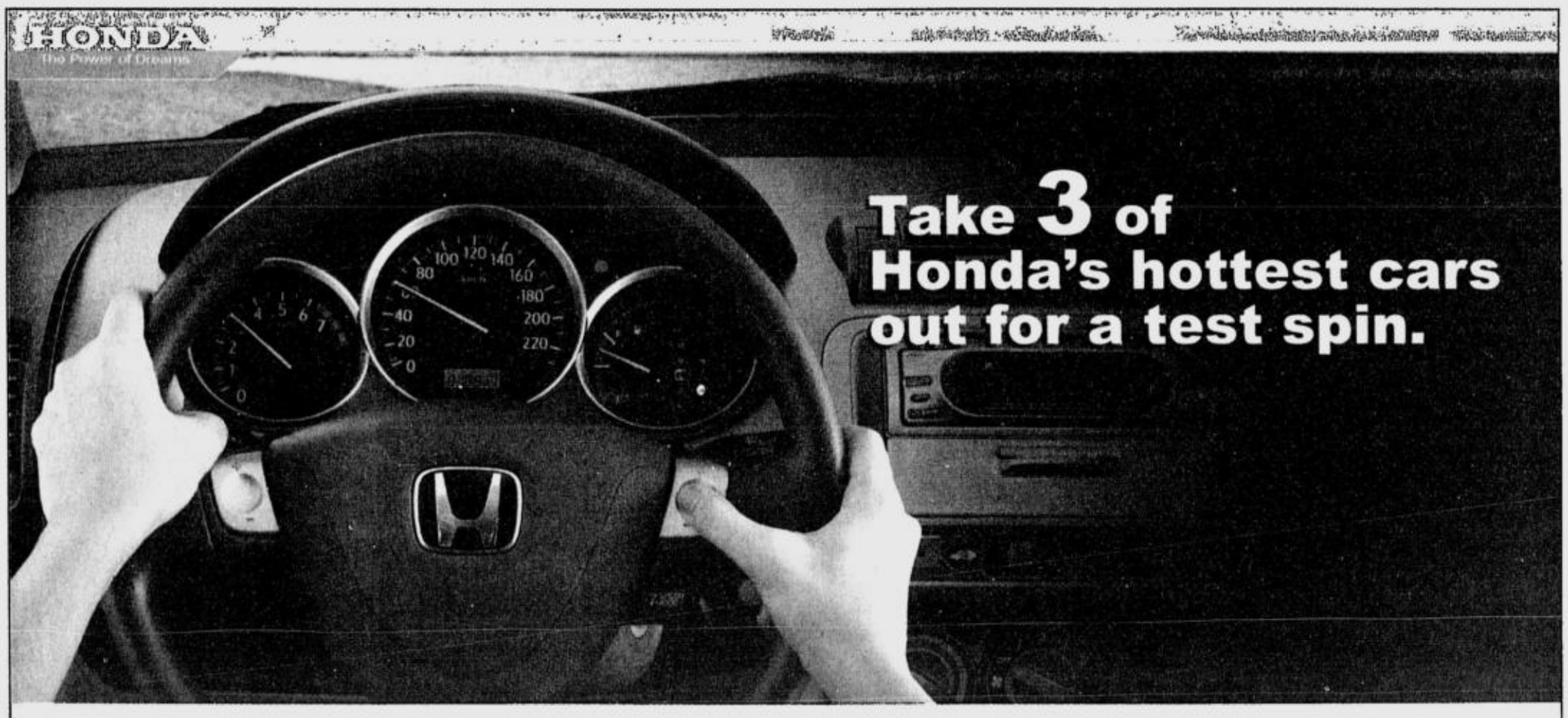
The digital movie, produced by MLR Films, has been invited to the 30th Sao Paolo, Brazil International Film Festival in October.

On July 19, Jeturian and Pareño had arrived in New Delhi. "Kubrador" was screened for a capacity crowd the following day.

Joji Alonso, MLR Films executive producer, who has stayed behind in Manila, told the INQUIRER: "They told me that one jury member (an Indonesian actress) had approached Gina to congratulate her for her performance. The jury member understood Filipino because her father, a diplomat, had been stationed in the Philippines for nine years. She told Jeffrey she was amazed at how real the whole movie had felt."

There were 12 Asian films in competition—from Japan, Taiwan, Iran, Malaysia, India, Singapore, Turkey, Philippines, Iraq, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Saudi Arabia.

Other Filipino films shown in the Asian Frescoes section (exhibition) were Doy del Mundo's "Pepot Artista," John Torres' "Todo Todo Teros," Mark Meiley's "La Visa Loca" and Aureaus Solito's "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros."



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Thieves cripple Mayon hotline

THIEVES CUT PHONE lines to steal about 30 meters of copper wire around lava-spilling Mayon volcano, crippling the communications of volcanologists who warned yesterday that an explosive eruption could still occur.

"The copper wire may be worth a few hundred pesos, but it may spell the difference between life and death for residents near Mayon," said Ernesto Corpus from the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

Other officials said the theft, discovered early Monday, prevented them from transmitting observations and updates to Manila headquarters.

The 2,474-meter Mayon volcano came to life on July 14, spilling lava and red-hot boulders in a "mild and quiet" eruption. Volcanologists said Monday the lava flow has now reached about four kilometers from the crater, triggering ground vibrations.

"The probability for an explosive eruption to occur is still fair," they said in a statement.

The government has declared a no-go area for a six-kilometer zone around the crater, but several thousand still live and farm within the area and could not be forced out until there is a mandatory evacuation order.

Mayon is one of the Philippines' 22 active volcanos. *AP*

A plus METRO

Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

Text us your feedback: inquirer net name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

BAYWALK may have been empty of promenaders yesterday but it was filled with trash washed ashore by big waves. Employees of the Manila City Hall promptly swung into action and cleaned up the strip. REM ZAMORA

Bay trash ends up on tourist walk

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF MANILA yesterday recovered a huge pile of garbage—enough to fill up four trucks—that was swept ashore by big waves in Manila Bay.

Rafael Borromeo, head of the city's Department of Public Service (DPs), said the strong winds and big waves brought on by typhoon "Glenda" stirred up the garbage and debris floating on the water and dumped them on Baywalk.

"Most of the trash consisted of plastic bags, styrofoam and bamboo poles," Borromeo said. "We do not usually retrieve this much garbage in our everyday operations."

The city government official said they were able to recover eight truckloads of trash from Manila Bay last week.

Mayor Lito Atienza had earlier instructed local government officials to post notices on establishments with dirty premises as part of the city's intensified cleanliness campaign.

Atienza conducted a surprise inspection in San Andres last Thursday with Borromeo, Manila Youth bureau director Jason Valencia, barangay officials and litter wardens from the Universidad de Manila.

The mayor said all business permits issued by City Hall specified the duties and responsibilities of establishment owners to keep their premises clean. Failure to comply was sufficient ground for the revocation of a business permit.

The entire DPS crew and the city's litter wardens were mobilized to ensure the strict implementation of Manila's intensified cleanliness campaign.

Borromeo, meanwhile, said no families were displaced from their homes because of the typhoon. Only España Street experienced flooding which immediately receded at around 7 a.m. yesterday, he added.

Fire hits fast-food chain's stock room

₱10M lost as blaze eats up Pasig warehouse under driving rain

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

AS STRONG RAINS POUNDED THE metropolis early yesterday, fire broke out inside the two-story warehouse of a fast-food chain in Pasig City, devouring more than P10 million worth of property.

Firefighters took almost nine hours to put out the fire—fueled by the piles of disposable plates, utensils and pails of cooking oil—inside the commissary of Kenny Rogers Restaurant and Seattle's Best Coffee in Barangay Kapitolyo.

FO1 Salvador Norberte told the INQUIRER the fire broke out at 12:38 a.m. at the ground floor of the warehouse on Brickstone Street.

It began in the storeroom for stocks of disposable utensils and cooking oil, Norberte said.

Watchmen quickly turned off electrical connections the moment they saw the blaze.

But the darkness caused more panic among the more than a dozen employees working inside the warehouse, a big part of which served as a freezer for food stocks, Norberte said.

The fire grew rapidly, razing the second floor which was made of wood.

Firefighters managed to declare the fire under control four hours later.

But they continued hosing down water into the razed warehouse, whose ceiling had also collapsed, for the next five hours to make sure the blaze had completely died out.

Nobody was seriously injured, although Norberte said a firefighter sustained a minor cut in his hand during the operation.

Investigators are still determining what triggered the fire.

Firefighters have been warning residents not to be deceived into thinking that fires are not likely to break out during heavy rains.

Leaking ceilings could soak electricity lines and trigger fires, SFO1 Noel Guiyab of the Marikina City Fire Station had said earlier.

Five days ago, a fire razed at least a dozen houses in Barangay Malanday, Marikina City.

"House owners are advised to check their electricity lines this rainy season. They should watch out if some connections are spliced and if these are already soaked in water, especially if they have leaking roof problems," Guiyab said.

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Grisly catch

THE BODIES of two women—Riza Laroco and Lucia Sevillano—were found floating on the Napindan River in Taguig City by a fisherman Sunday. The upper half of their bodies were stuffed into a sack. Both were naked from the waist down. The bodies were found by fisherman Emelito Lababit and his mother, Fely, at around 11:25 a.m. Sunday, said Supt. Alfred Corpus, Taguig police chief. Case investigators P03 Ehron Balauat and P01 Melvin Garcia said the two women were residents of Taytay, Rizal. Rolando, Laroco's brother, told the police that on Tuesday evening, he had received a text message from an anonymous sender telling him that his sister and a friend were kidnapped by four men.

Jocelyn R. Uy

2 robbers killed

TWO SUSPECTED robbers were shot dead by a policeman inside a jeepney before dawn yesterday in Taguig City. In his report, city police chief Supt. Alfred Corpus identified one of the suspects as Wenceslao Maala Jr. The other had yet to be identified as of press time. Initial investigation showed that P01 Deogracias Basang, a member of the Regional Special Action Unit, was among the jeepney passengers that the robbers tried to hold up on the East Service Road, PNR Site in Barangay Western Bicutan at around 3:30 a.m. yesterday. Basang, who was on his way to work at Camp Bagong Diwa, said he was about to get off the jeepney when two of the six suspected robbers, seated at the rear of the vehicle, blocked his path and declared a heist. The policeman tried to resist but Maala's accomplice allegedly stabbed him in the left arm with a kitchen knife.

Jocelyn R. Uy

UE diamond jubilee forum

SEN. ALFREDO S. Lim leads distinguished University of the East alumni who will take part in the second UE Diamond Jubilee Colloquium to be held on July 28 at the UE Theatre. Dubbed "A Day with the Generals featuring a Colloquium on National Security (Where are We Heading?)," it will feature UE alumni Col. Robert Theodore S. Romero, Generals Efren P. Orbon, Lucas Managuelod and Commodore Amado A. Sanglay. For inquiries, please call 7355471 to 82 (UE Manila), 3674572 (UE Caloocan) or visit www.ue.edu.ph.

Survival kit for urban dweller 'a must'

By Tarra V. Quismundo

IT COULD BE A CASE SMALLER THAN a lunchbox or a sturdy purse. But making room for a survival kit in your bag could spell the difference between life and death.

During a time when emergencies could occur without warning, carrying a small lifesaving kit should become the habit of every urban dweller, if you ask the head of a nongovernment organization (NGO) who wants to turn each Filipino into a lifesaver.

"It could come in a size that you could carry around. It's better that you have it and not need it than need it and not have it," said Louie Domingo, vice president and operations director of Emergency Resource Center (ERC) Inc.

Domingo said the kit must contain items that are "multipurpose and multienvironment," as it should be usable in any location where an emergency might occur—inside a jeepney, on a street corner, up a skyscraper or deep in the jungle. "Even the container should have a purpose. So it could be a container that would remain intact even if exposed to rains or if caught in something sharp. It could even be a lady's *kikay* (vanity) kit transformed into a survival kit," he said.

What should the kit contain?

Besides a separate bottle of water, it should have energy food like a pack of crackers or some candies. Domingo recommends something sweet as sugar can satisfy hunger pangs and keep the mind alert.

Another must: A small container of 10 percent povidone iodine solution—your typical topical medication for injuries that are sold in drugstores. Domingo said the solution has proved effective in making deep well water or rainwater safe to drink.

"The rule is you put four drops of the solution in one liter of water, then you allow it to set for 30 minutes. When you still doubt the quality of water, you could increase the staying time," he explained.

The survival kit should also have a small cutting tool and a portable light source like a pocket-size flashlight which may either be battery-operated or self-powered.

"You should have a light and a knife. You can only cut so much by bending, biting or pulling and you don't glow, so you need a light source," Domingo said.

A pocket radio with an AM function would help as a source of information in case of emergency. And don't forget the spare batteries. Domingo said battery-operated equipment in the kit should require batteries of the same size when you need a change. So, if your flashlight has a double A battery, so should your pocket radio.

Lastly, some sewing tools like needles and thread also deserve space in the survival kit. There just has to be a way for you to put that loose button back in place before an important meeting.

"So, you can still go to the mall, you can enjoy the places you still want to go to even if at the back of your mind, you still have the fear that there's going to be an earthquake. So what? You have your survival kit," Domingo said.

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

DID YOU KNOW

Did you know?

THE CITY of Valenzuela was named after Dr. Pio Valenzuela, a member of the Katipunan who went to Dapitan, Zamboanga del Norte in 1896 to consult Dr. Jose Rizal about the group's plan to carry out a revolution. Valenzuela was born in 1869 to an affluent family in Polo, Bulacan. The town became the municipality of Valenzuela in 1963—seven years after the Katipunero's death—by virtue of Executive Order 46 signed by then President Diosdado Macapagal. It officially became part of Metro Manila in 1975 and was declared a city in 1998.

Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research

Shelter aid proposed for Pasig calamity victims

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE PASIG CITY COUNCIL HAS PROposed the automatic allocation of financial assistance to families affected by calamities like fire, earthquakes and floods.

In a proposed resolution scheduled for second reading this week, councilors recommended a "shelter allowance" of P5,000 for affected house owners and P2,000 for those who live in rented homes..

Apart from the shelter allowance, calamity victims will also receive a week's worth of food supplies, including toiletries.

"It is the primary concern of the city government to extend help and support to its constituents who are victims of calamities," the councilors said.

To implement the resolution should it be approved, funds would be taken from the city calamity fund, the proposal added.

The city council had earlier approved an ordinance setting aside 20 percent of the city government's calamity fund for disaster preparedness.

This would allow the city government to set in place disaster preparedness measures and buy equipment to lessen the impact of disasters, councilors said.

Budget officer Remedios Pastor told the INQUIRER the city had allocated P140 million of its 2006 budget as calamity fund.

The city has a P3.6 billion budget for 2006.

Local governments are mandated to set aside five percent of their estimated revenues for calamities.

The funds are to be used only during and in the aftermath of a calamity.

What's wrong with outdoor advertising?

ONE OF THE POWERS OF A court is citing for contempt an institution or person for disobeying its order or decision.

Being cited for contempt means being made to pay a fine, at the very least, or jailed indefinitely, in extreme cases.

But it seems the judiciary is not using its power of contempt against the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) in its decision preventing the MMDA from destroying advertising billboards and signs on railway posts along Edsa.

Is it because the MMDA is a government institution?

But what's the difference between a government agency and a private agency?

Isn't the law applied equally for both government entities and individuals?

On Oct. 25, 2005, the Supreme Court affirmed the permanent injunction issued by the Pasig Regional Trial Court against the MMDA on the issue of tearing down advertising billboards and signs on railway posts on Edsa.

The MMDA had earlier filed an appeal with the Court of Appeals on the same issue. The appellate court affirmed the Pasig RTC's permanent injunction.

So the MMDA went all the way to the Supreme Court and it also upheld the Pasig RTC.

The MMDA should have stopped tearing down the advertising billboards and signs on the

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

railway posts on Edsa. It did not.

Instead, the agency, flagrantly violating a Supreme Court injunction, continues to destroy the billboards and signs put up by Trackworks.

Trackworks is under contract with the government-owned Metro Rail Transit Corp. (MRTC) to put up advertising billboards and signs on MRT posts along Edsa. The contract was signed on Oct. 27, 1998.

In 2002, the MMDA began tearing down advertising billboards and signs on MRT posts. That was when Trackworks filed a petition in the Pasig RTC.

* * *

Question: Why is the MMDA zeroing in only on the advertising billboards and signs on MRT posts when there are other billboards and signs along Edsa?

Why not also tear down the other advertising structures if the reason is that they are traffic hazard?

What's wrong with the advertising b.illboards and signs on MRT posts when the MMDA doesn't find anything wrong with those billboards that are as tall along Edsa that advertise goods from cosmetics to cars?

* * *

A traffic safety institution in the United States has given outdoor advertising a clean bill of health.

The presence of billboards in US highways are no more distracting to motorists than ringing cellular phones and screaming children in cars.

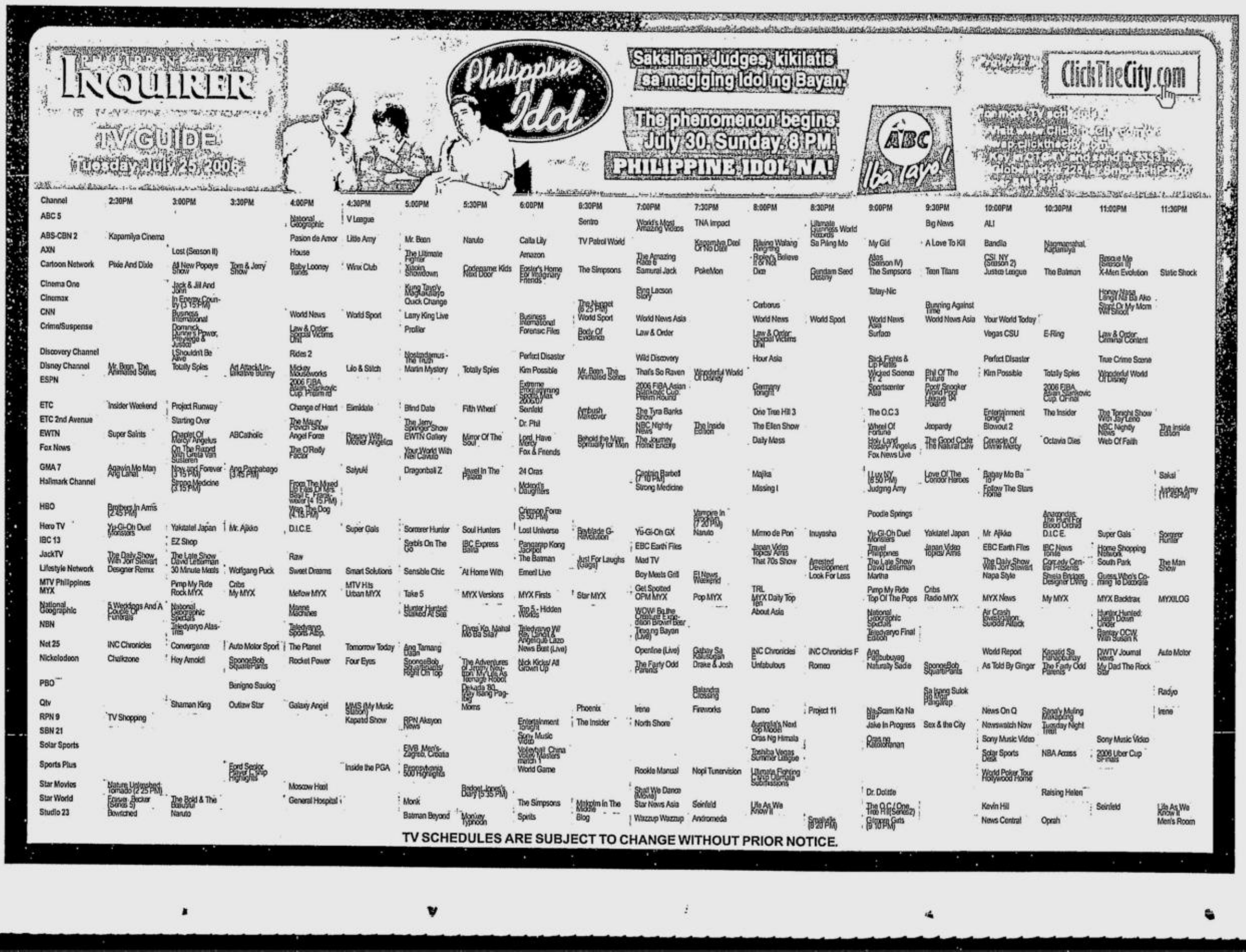
That's what the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute found out upon the request of the Foundation for Outdoor Advertising Research and Education.

"The presence of a billboard does not cause a measurable change in driver behavior in terms of usual behavior, speed maintenance or lane keeping," said Suzanne E. Lee, the study's principal investigator at the Blackburg, Virginia university.

Virginia Tech recruited 36 motorists who drove specially outfitted cars on a 35-mile stretch in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The route included highways and secondary routes, a typical mix of urban and suburban landscapes. There were 30 billboards of varying sizes on one or both sides of the road.

"The bottom line is there was no difference," said Charles Lamarr, chair of the Foundation for Outdoor Advertising Research and Education.



Hunger-striking Saddam hospitalized, tube-fed

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—SADDAM Hussein was hospitalized Sunday and fed with a tube on the 17th day of a hunger strike to ensure he was healthy enough to continue with his trial, the chief prosecutor said. The procedure came as the ex-leader's troubled trial nears a verdict that could lead to his hanging.

Prosecutor Jaafar al-Moussawi said he learned that Saddam's health had become "unstable because of the hunger strike" during a visit to the US-run prison where the former ruler and his seven fellow defendants are held.

"We took him to hospital and he is being currently fed by a tube," al-Moussawi told The Associated Press without elaboration.

Al-Moussawi said the feeding tube had stabilized Saddam's health and the former president would appear in court as scheduled this week. Saddam was not scheduled to appear Monday when the trial resumes after a two-week break because other defendants are to give their final summations.

Saddam and seven co-defendants have been on trial since Oct. 19 in the deaths of Shiite Muslims after a crackdown in the town of Dujail, which was launched after an assassination attempt there in 1982. They could receive the death penalty—by hanging—if convicted.

But Saddam's lawyer Khalil al-Dulaimi said none of the defendants nor their lawyers would appear Monday unless the court "meets the minimum requirement ensuring a fair trial for the defendants."

Al-Dulaimi told The Associated Press that Saddam was "in high spirits and his health very good" despite the hunger strike.

SADDAM REUTERS

US officials had acknowledged that Saddam and three other detainees had been refusing food since the evening meal of July 7 but were drinking coffee and sweet team. The Americans insisted that the 69-year-old Saddam was still in good health despite two weeks without food, and that he had been advised by "medical professionals" of the dangers of not eating.

A spokesperson for the US detention command would not say whether Saddam had been hospitalized but said he was under medical supervision and was "voluntarily" taking nutrients through a feeding tube.

"He's continuing to refuse meals," Lt. Col. Keir-Kevin Curry said. "He remains in coalition care and custody, and we're providing appropriate medical care."

US officials have not identified the others who were refusing food, but defense lawyers said they are co-defendants Barzan Ibrahim, Saddam's half brother; former Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan and Awad al-Bandar.

The hunger strike was launched to demand better security for the defense team. Three of them have been assassinated since the trial began, most recently Khamis al-Obeidi who was abducted and slain June 21.

The defense team blamed the killing on Shiite militiamen and announced it would boycott the trial in protest over the lack of security.

In a letter to the court, the defense said it wanted US authorities to provide security for the lawyers and their families. It also demanded a 45-day recess to allow it to prepare closing statements and that court promise to allow them as much time as they wanted to present final arguments.

Chief Judge Raouf Abdel-Rahman suspended the proceedings July 11 and warned that if the defense did not appear Monday, he would appoint other attorneys to make the final summations.

Al-Bandar and Ramadan were to make final arguments Monday, followed by Saddam and Barzan. The four other lawyers have already presented their summations. Following summations, the trial will be suspended while the five-judge panel deliberates a verdict.

The verdict is expected by mid-August. Saddam is also due to stand trial Aug. 21 for a crackdown against the Kurds in the 1980s during which an estimated 100,000 Kurds were killed. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

American Bar says Bush flouting Constitution

WASHINGTON—The American Bar Association said Sunday that President Bush was flouting the Constitution and undermining the rule of law by claiming the power to disregard selected provisions of bills that he signed. In a report, a bipartisan 11-member panel of the bar association said Bush had used so-called "signing statements" far more than his predecessors, raising constitutional objections to more than 800 provisions in more than 100 laws on the ground that they infringed on his prerogatives. In the ABA panel report, members said that these broad assertions of presidential power amount to a "line-item veto" and improperly deprive Congress of the opportunity to override the veto. For example, in signing a statutory ban on torture and other national security laws approved by Congress, Bush reserved the right to disregard them. The bar association panel said the use of signing statements in this way was "contrary to the rule of law and our constitutional system of separation of powers." If the president deems a bill unconstitutional, he can veto it, the panel said, but "signing statements should not be a substitute for a presidential veto." *NYT*

Pakistan in large-scale nuke expansion, says Post

WASHINGTON—Pakistan is building a reactor that could produce enough plutonium for 40 to 50 nuclear weapons in what would be a major expansion of its nuclear program, The Washington Post reported on Monday. Satellite photos show what appears to be the construction site for a larger nuclear reactor adjacent to Pakistan's only plutonium production reactor, according to an analysis by nuclear experts at the Washington-based Institute for Science, the newspaper said. The analysts concluded that the diameter of the structure's metal shell suggests a very large reactor "operating in excess of 1,000 megawatts thermal," the Post said. "Such a reactor could produce over 200 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium per year, assuming it operates at full power a modest 220 days per year," the newspaper said, quoting the technical assessment. "At 4 to 5 kilograms of plutonium per weapon, this stock would allow the production of over 40 to 50 nuclear weapons a year." Pakistan currently is capable of producing about 10 kilograms of plutonium a year, enough for about two warheads, the Post said. *Reuters*

Kosovo to seek independence in talks

VIENNA—Kosovo stakes its claim to independence on Monday at top-level talks between Serbs and ethnic Albanians, the first since Nato's 1999 air war wrested control of the province from Serbia. The one-day meeting in Vienna formally puts the international status of the majority Albanian province—independence or autonomy—on the agenda of a UN-led mediation process that began in February. The presidents and prime ministers of both sides will talk face-to-face for the first time since the West intervened to drive out Serb forces accused of ethnic cleansing and the United Nations took control. Concrete results are unlikely, given what diplomats say is an unbridgeable chasm between the two sides. Ninety percent of Kosovo's 2 million people are Albanians who reject any return to Serb rule, while Serbia sees Kosovo as forever its "Jerusalem." UN chief mediator Martti Ahtisaari has played down hopes of a breakthrough on Monday. He is working to a year-end deadline set by the West for proposing a settlement, but six months of lower-level direct talks on the rights of the 100,000 Serbs still in Kosovo have produced few signs of compromise. *Reuters*

Japan deploys fish in war on terror

TOKYO—Forget about Japanese technology. Japan's latest contribution to the war on terrorism is tiny fish, which will be deployed to detect contamination of water supplies. Light-orange ricefish, which are some four-centimeters (one-and-a-half inches) long and are commonly kept as pets in Japan, will alert authorities if their movement is irregular. Shizuoka prefecture south of Tokyo devised the fish alert system after the government asked the country to come up with antiterrorist measures following the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the United States. If the water is contaminated, the fish show irregular behavior, such as swimming with their noses near the surface because of breathing problems, or simply die. "This live water surveillance system is useful because usual water filters take up to 15 hours to detect contamination, whereas with these ricefish it will only take three hours," said Mitsuyoshi Hori, an official handling the project. *AFP*

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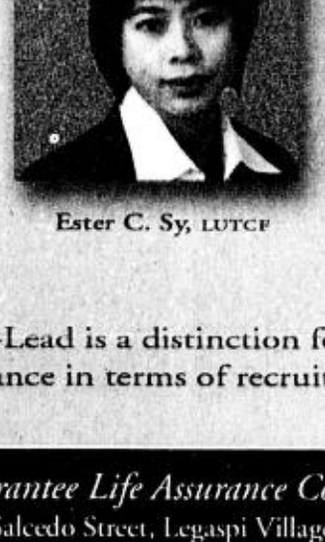

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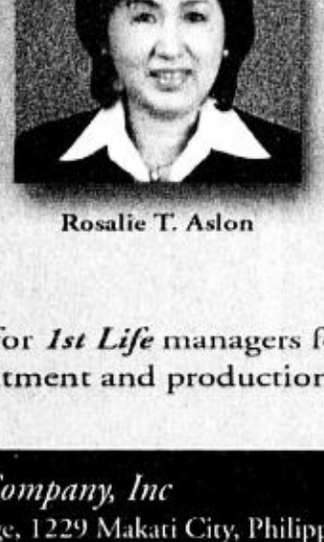

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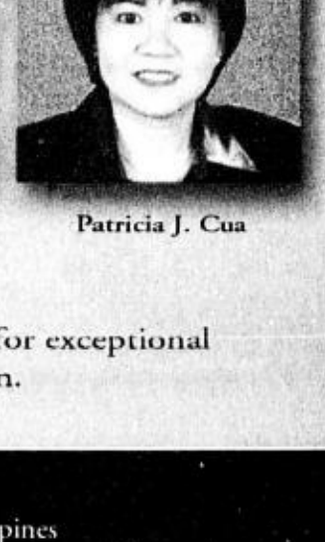

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

SMOKE billows following an Israeli air strike in the southern suburbs of Beirut, a stronghold of Hezbollah, July 23. AFP

Israel pushes deeper into Lebanon

LEBANESE photographer Layal Nejib, 23, was killed Sunday when an Israeli strike hit near her taxi in southern Lebanon. AP

ON THE ISRAEL-LEBANON BORDER—HEAVY fighting erupted Monday as Israeli ground forces pushed further into Lebanon, entering another Hezbollah stronghold, and at least nine Israeli soldiers were wounded, the military said. The guerrillas also fired more rockets at northern Israel.

Israeli troops took control of a hilltop in the Lebanese town of Bint Jbail after a heavy artillery barrage, but had not taken the town itself, military officials said.

Nearly constant gunfire and explosions could be heard in southern Lebanon from the Israeli side of the border, and large plumes of gray smoke rose over the area.

Several Israeli tanks and armored bulldozers were seen heading toward the battle, but two tanks also traversed the rocky hills at high speed, crossing back into Israel to carry wounded soldiers out. The wounded were taken to civilian ambulances, which sped off toward hospitals with sirens blaring.

The military said it captured two Hezbollah guerrillas, and Israeli media said attacks by Israel's air force had caused some Hezbollah casualties.

Bint Jbail, a major town, is about 2 kilometers north of the hilltop village of Maroun al-Ras, another Hezbollah center. Over the weekend, Israeli ground troops fought for control of Maroun al-Ras, which is less than 500 yards from the border.

The army said it was expanding its ground operation in Lebanon, which had been limited during the two-week offensive to pinpoint operations near the border—a policy that military analysts said may well be insufficient to achieve Israel's goal of pushing Hezbollah back and destroying its ability to attack Israel.

"The scope continues to grow in recent days," Brig. Gen. Alon Friedman told Israel Army Radio. "We are advancing."

Friedman said the operation would continue for up to 10 days "in order to achieve the basic goals we set down," including trying to stop Hezbollah rocket fire.

The Israeli military said that during the past 24 hours its planes had hit more than 270 targets across Lebanon, including 21 missile launchers, more than 50 Hezbollah buildings and Hezbollah communication lines.

The army said it captured two Hezbollah guerrillas, the first it had taken any into custody during the fighting. "When the enemy surrenders, we take them prisoner. The two prisoners are located in Israel and will be held here with the aim of interrogating them," said Friedman.

Two more rockets were fired into Israel on Monday, landing in the northern town of Kiryat Shmona, rescue officials said. No casualties or damage were reported.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was traveling to the Middle East on Monday to discuss the crisis with officials. She was to meet Monday night with Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and on Tuesday with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

On Sunday 95 rockets were fired into Israel, killing two people in the city of Haifa, the military said.

Israel launched its operation in Lebanon after Hezbollah guerrillas killed three soldiers and captured two others in a cross-border raid on July 12.

Before Israel's capture of two of its fighters, Hezbollah leaders had demanded that Israel release Palestinian and Hezbollah prisoners to win freedom for the two captured Israeli soldiers. Israel has ruled out talks, demanding the unconditional return of its soldiers, but it has negotiated such exchanges in the past. *AP*

Bush still bucks ceasefire despite Saudi king's plea

WASHINGTON—WHITE HOUSE officials said President George W. Bush remains opposed to an immediate ceasefire to stop violence in the Middle East, despite personal pleas from ally Saudi Arabia that he help stop the bloodshed.

Saudi King Abdullah beseeched Bush to intervene in Israel's military campaign against Hezbollah in Lebanon, where the death toll is approaching 400 after less than two weeks of bombing. Abdullah's request was handdelivered to Bush by Saudi officials who requested a meeting Sunday at the White House.

"We requested a ceasefire to allow for a cessation of hostilities," Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal told reporters as he departed the West Wing.

"I have brought a letter from the Saudi king to stop the bleeding in Lebanon, and there has been an agreement to save Lebanese lives, Lebanese properties and what the Lebanese have built, and to save this country from the ordeal it is facing," Saud said.

Saud's comment reflected Bush's past statements that all want the violence to stop. But Bush has refused to press for an immediate ceasefire.

"Our position on an immediate ceasefire is well known and has not changed," said White House national security spokesperson Frederick Jones.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice also participated in the Oval Office meeting before departing for Israel in the first US diplomatic effort on the ground since Israel began bombing Lebanon on July 12. The fighting has killed hundreds in Lebanon and dozens in Israel.

On the way to a refueling stop in Ireland, Rice indicated an openness to working with Syria to resolve the crisis. In recent weeks, the Bush administration has blamed Syria, along with Iran, for stoking the recent violence by encouraging Hezbollah to attack northern Israel. *AP*

VOODOO RITUAL
Haitians carry the parts of a cow in a mud pool during a Voodoo festival at the village of Plaine de Nord in Cap-Haitien, Haiti, July 23. Hundreds of Voodoo believers are in Plaine Du Nord to celebrate the annual festival. REUTERS

Minister calls for more Aussie babies

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA—Australian Treasurer Peter Costello on Monday renewed his call for women to have more babies, calling it vital to the country's long-term health.

The ethnic composition of Australia's population will change if the fertility rate continues to run below replacement levels of 2.1 children per woman, Costello said while launching a federal government census.

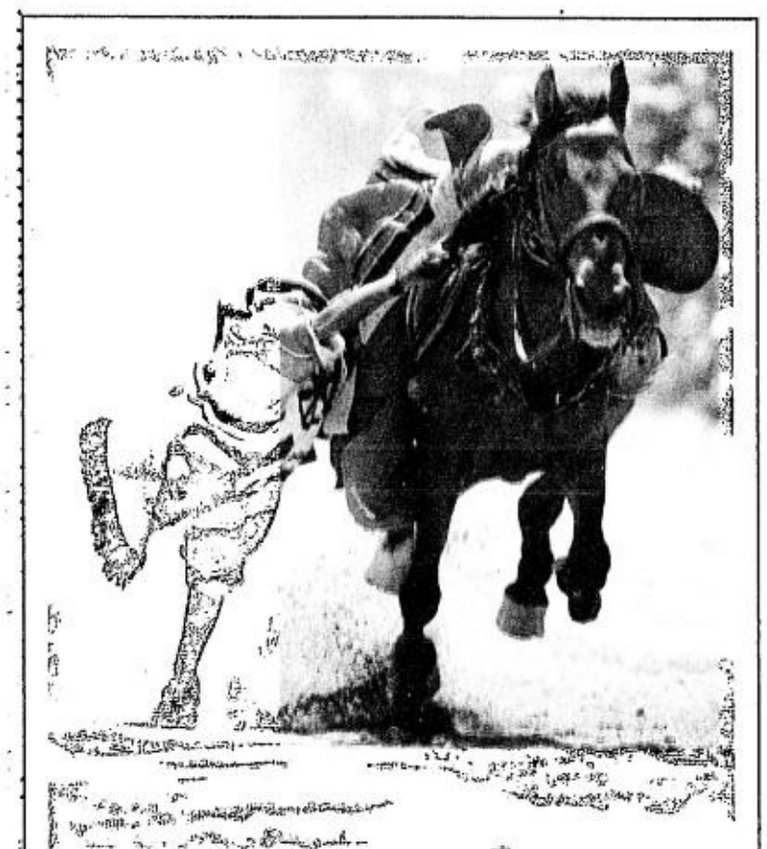
"There are some European countries with low birth rates and high immigration which have moved into this situation, and it has caused a lot of social division," he told reporters, without naming the countries.

Increasing the birth rate would cost taxpayers more in health and education spending and would create a short-term shortage of women in the work force, he said.

"But in the long run, it is essential to hold our population and, preferably, increase it so that we have the economic base to give Australians a growing standard of living as well as providing support for the aged in the future," said Costello, a father of three.

Australia's birth rate has increased in the past year to 1.8 children per woman from 1.73, following a steady decline from 3.55 in the early 1960s.

Australia was one of the few developed countries to record an increase in its fertility rate last year, the latest issue of Science magazine reported. Other nations, particularly Japan and Russia, are facing huge population declines in coming decades, it said. *AP*



THE HORSEMAN COMETH
A Tibetan displays his horsemanship during the festival of "Dama," or shooting arrows on horse, in Jiangzi in China's Tibetan Autonomous Region, July 23. The over 500-year-old "Dama" festival opened on Thursday and will last for a week. AP

Issues after obesity surgery common

WASHINGTON—FOUR OF EVERY 10 patients who undergo weight-loss surgery develop complications within six months, the federal government said Sunday.

The number of such surgical procedures has been rising rapidly, along with the incidence of obesity, which now afflicts 30 percent of adults in the United States, health officials said.

Obesity surgery is helping thousands of Americans lose weight and reduce the risk of diabetes and other life-threatening diseases, said Dr. Carolyn M. Clancy, director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, a unit of the Public Health Service. But she added, "This study shows how important it is for patients to consider the potential complications."

Many of the complications were so serious that patients were readmitted to hospitals or visited emergency rooms within six months.

In the procedure, known as bariatric surgery, doctors reduce the number of calories that a person can consume and absorb. One of the more common techniques restricts the size of the stomach and the length of the intestine, where nutrients are absorbed.

Federal researchers found that complications from obesity surgery significantly increased costs. *NYT*

'Anne Frank 2006' chronicles war

By Tom Zeller Jr.

AS THE WORLD'S GAZE HAS turned to another ethnic and religious calamity—this time between Israel and militants in Lebanon—a question that almost immediately arises is just what Anne Frank might have made of YouTube.com.

That's where Galya Daube, a 15-year-old from Haifa, Israel, uploaded a jittery, first-person video clip last week, made as she ran through her home, rushed down whitewashed staircases and blurred her way from room to room toward the family's bomb shelter (snipurl.com/Galya).

Hezbollah, the Lebanon-based militant group that set off a furious air and artillery assault from Israel on July 12 by crossing the border and kidnapping two Israeli soldiers, was raining missiles of its own on Galya's seaside city, where she was enjoying summer break between her freshman and sophomore years of high school.

A civil air raid siren can be heard in the background.

Galya has since fled Haifa to stay with her brother in Tel Aviv: "Since my camera was right next to me, I made a short clip of my running down to the shelter. Once I saw the clip, I decided to post it online so people could get a glimpse of what we go through when under attack."

From the ravaged parts of Lebanon, meanwhile, several young scribes have been documenting Israel's relentless pounding from their point of view in English-language blogs.

"Six blasts in the past 10 mn made this building rock," wrote Mana, a diarist blogging from Beirut at cedarseed.livejournal.com, on July 15. "The sound of the jets is so faint I don't think they're very close."

An hour later, she wrote: "I don't want to become a refugee."

Just 80 miles to south, as Hezbollah missiles rained down on Haifa, Yuval Kantor, along with his 12-year-old brother, Eyal, huddled in an inner corridor of their home. Kantor picked up his digital camera, shot some clips and posted them online at YouTube.com.

He said he posted videos online because he wanted friends and family to see what was going on—"to show them my reality," he said. *NYT*

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

SPORTS

Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

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Tiger's royal encore

Emotional Woods earns 11th 'major' at British Open

HOYLAKE, ENGLAND—THE EMOTIONS HAD BEEN TRAPPED in Tiger Woods since he stood at his father's grave two months ago, set loose only after he tapped in his final putt Sunday to win the British Open.

It was his 11th major championship, but the first one they couldn't share.

He plucked the ball out of the cup, turned slightly and started to grin when a mixture of sadness and satisfaction washed over his face and he screamed out, "Yes!"

Woods buried his head in the shoulder of caddie Steve Williams, sobbing uncontrollably, his chest heaving. Then he found his wife, Elin, and hugged her for the longest minute, tears still streaming down his face.

"I'm kind of the one who bottles things up a little bit and moves on," he said. "But at that moment, it just came pouring out. And of all the things that my father has meant to me and the game of golf, I just wish he would have seen it one more time."

It sure would have looked familiar.

Woods was ruthless as ever on the brown, baked links of Royal Liverpool, relying more on brains than brawn.

He hit driver only one time the entire week—the 16th hole of the first round—and relied on iron play that was so impeccable his caddie kept a sheet of paper of all the shots Woods missed.

There were only three of them.

"I don't think anyone has ever hit long irons that well," Williams said.

It carried Woods to a 5-under 67 and a two-shot victory over Chris DiMarco, making him the first player since Tom Watson in 1982-83 to win golf's oldest championship in consecutive years.

It was his first victory since his father, Earl, died May 3 after a brutal bout with cancer. Some questioned whether Woods could regain his focus after taking nine weeks off, especially after he returned to the US Open and missed the cut for the first time in a major.

Woods earned his 11th title in 39 career major starts as a professional.

Turns out, Woods had an answer for everyone.

And even when DiMarco made a charge with another gritty rally in a major to close with a 68, Woods responded with three straight birdies that allowed him to stride confidently up the 18th fairway at Hoylake and toward the claret jug.

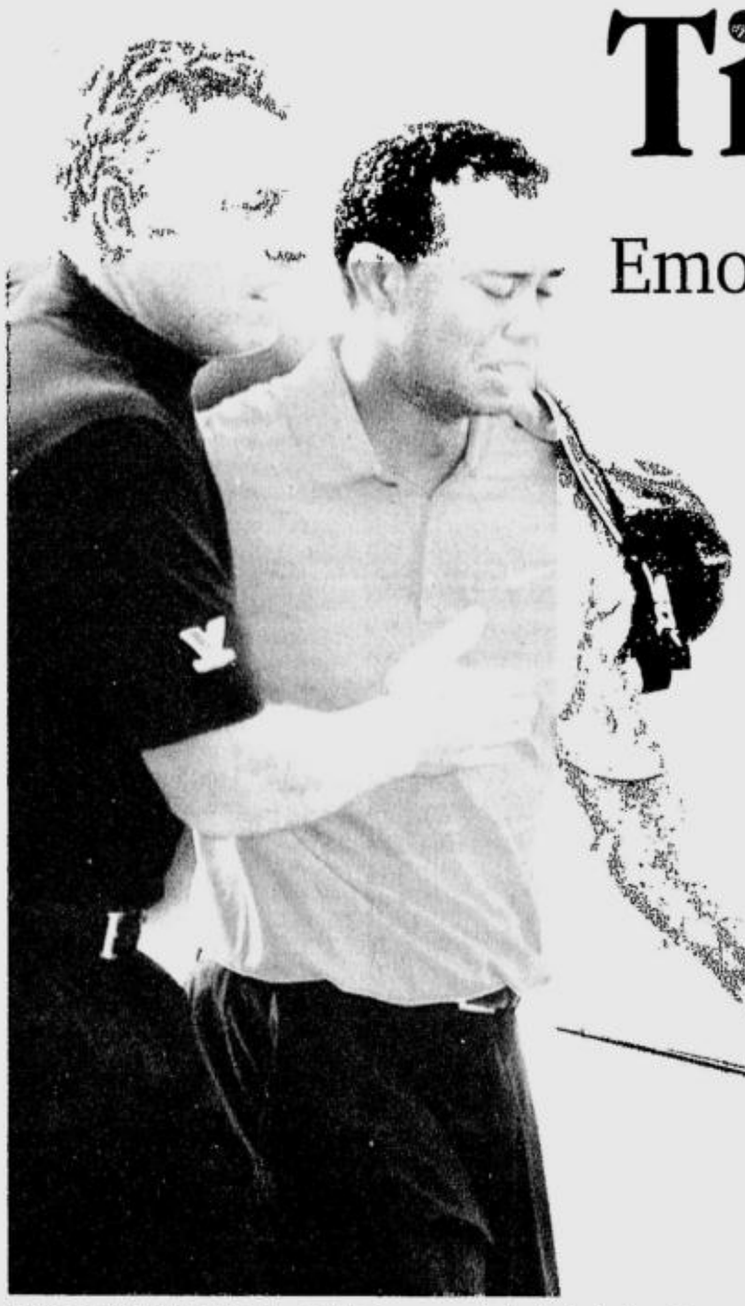
No one could stop Woods from winning his 11th career major at age 30. He is tied with Walter Hagen for second on the career list and is one step closer to the 18 professional majors won by Jack Nicklaus.

He had to work for this one because of DiMarco, equally emotional and inspired while coping with a more recent loss.

DiMarco's mother, Norma, died of a heart attack July 4 in Colorado. DiMarco, who pushed Woods into a playoff at the Masters last year, did all he could to deliver.

He made a 25-foot birdie on the par-3 13th to pull within one shot of Woods, then made a 50-foot par save on the 14th to stay in the game, a putt that rattled the cup and made everyone wonder if he had help from above.

TIGER'S/ A22



THIS ONE'S FOR DAD: The British Open trophy finally in the bag, Tiger Woods cries as he walks off the 18th green of the Royal Liverpool Golf Course in Hoylake, England. He is comforted by caddie Steve Williams. AP

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GAMES THURSDAY
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2 p.m.—NU vs UE
4 p.m.—Ateneo vs FEU

More bite than growl for Tigers

By Jasmine W. Payo

ROOKIE COACH PIDO Jarencio is already feeling the rigors of coaching in the UAAP men's basketball tournament.

"*Masakit pala sa ulo, nandoon yung* (It gives you a big headache because of the) tension," said Jarencio, the former Ginebra star who crossed over to the sidelines to coach his alma mater's varsity squad, the University of Santo Tomas Tigers.

But Jarencio has learned to endure the pain after the Tigers, considered a longshot for the title this season, pulled off back-to-back wins against defending champion Far Eastern U Tamaraws and preseason favorite University of the East.

This, despite the absence of injured veteran Jemal Vizcarra.

Vizcarra, one of the team's top scorers, sustained a hamstring injury in the Tigers' opening-day loss against the University of the Philippines.

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Win column

Espinola captures squash crown

LOCAL SQUASH'S RISING STAR, Ricky Espinola, whipped veteran Arnel Begornia, 10-9, 9-3, 9-1, recently to bag the Division 1 crown in the fourth leg of the Milo/SRAP circuit at the Makati Sports Club courts in Makati City. Espinola toppled Robert Garcia, 9-6, 10-8, 9-5, and Begornia surprised Edgar Balleber, 9-6, 9-6, 9-2, in the semifinals. Garcia finished third by downing Balleber, 9-7, 10-8, 6-9, 9-4. Edmar Carillo ruled Division 2, subduing Nelson Flores, 9-10, 9-7, 0-9, 6-9, 9-2, in the finals. Carillo knocked out Dino Aldeguer, 9-6, 5-9, 9-4, 9-7, and Flores ousted Joey Mabilangan, 9-1, 4-9, 9-4, 9-5, in the semifinals. Aldeguer clinched third spot at the expense of Mabilangan, 9-6, 9-4, 10-8. The winners received trophies and prizes from sponsor Milo and organizer Squash Rackets Association of the Philippines.

Don Bosco Makati nips Marist in OT

DON BOSCO TECHNOLOGICAL INstitute of Makati steadied in overtime to nose out Marist School, 61-60, Sunday in the 21st season of the Milo BEST Center Small Basketeers Philippines/Passerelle basketball tournament at the Xavier School gym. John Estabillo split his charities to give Don Bosco its first win in two Passerelle outings after Marist's John Ace Gervacio had scored a three-pointer to extend the game. In the other Passerelle contests, De La Salle Zobel routed UP Integrated School, 71-24, and Notre Dame of Greater Manila beat San Benildo Integrated School, 56-41. Jonathan Calugcug outscored the whole UPIS squad in the first quarter, accounting for eight of his game-high 11 points. Meanwhile, St. Mary's College rode on the heroics of the Marc Harley Villamar to nip Notre Dame, 34-32, in SBP action. In other SBP games, La Salle Green Hills blasted Trinity College, 65-13; Lourdes School of Mandaluyong whipped Sta. Clara International Academy, 54-19; Lourdes School of Quezon City trimmed San Benildo Integated School, 31-20; DBTI Makati beat PWU-JASMS, 47-30; and Xavier School downed Marist School, 27-18. Jose Rizal University toppled PWU-JASMS, 49-45, in another SBP match played last Saturday after La Salle Antipolo had crushed Marist, 55-13, and Lourdes School Mandaluyong had beaten Community of Learners, 53-25. Marist subdued UPIS, 65-55, in the lone Passerelle game.

RP-Air21 settles for 4th in HK Super Cup

HONG KONG—RP-AIR21 SUFFERED ITS THIRD straight setback, this time at the hands of China Basketball Association (CBA) champion Winnerway Tigers, 102-87, Sunday and settled for fourth place in the 2006 Eastcolight-Super Kung Sheung Cup International Invitational basketball championship at the Hong Kong Coliseum.

The Filipinos made the most out of their depleted lineup and stayed in the game in the first 20 minutes against a tall Chinese squad beefed up by two 7-foot-1 giants.

The Filipinos even took the lead several times, the last at 42-39, on Bruce Dacia's two free throws to the delight of the flag-waving Filipino supporters who took time out from their hectic weekend schedule to cheer the RP-Air21 team.

Fatigue, however, caught up with the eight-man RP team also supported by Federal Tyres, Burlington and Accel.

Led by the sweet-shooting Yu Liang and 7-1 behemoth Su Wei, the Chinese seized the lead for good behind a 14-2 run midway in the third period.

"The boys tried their best, but they simply can't keep pace with their younger and taller Chinese counterparts in the second half," said RP-Air21 coach Bo Perasol, who called the shots together with former RP Youth mentor Johny Tam.

"Overall, I think the team performed well, considering the absence of starting forward Gary David (left in Manila due to injury), Yancy and Ranidel de Ocampo (who returned home in the middle of the tournament due to the death of their father) and Wynne Arboleda (who sustained a pulled muscle)," added Perasol.

Tam, who steered the Rommel Adducul-led RP-Burlington team to the title in 2002, noted the significant improvement of the participating countries this year.

The Basketball Association of the Philippines-supported RP-Air 21 squad finished with a 2-3 win-loss record. The Filipinos blasted Singapore (105-71) and Japan (116-87) before losing to the Asian American Sports Club-United States (79-97) and 13-time champion Hong Kong (76-83).

Despite the fourth-place finish, the Filipinos earned an invitation to compete in the inaugural Dr. Sun Yat Sen Cup, a prestigious, four-team tournament in Zhong Shan, China.

Also playing in the tournament to be held in the home province of the popular national hero of China are the Asian-American Sports Club, China and Malaysia.

Leo Avenido topscored with 18 points on 6-of-11 shooting against the Tigers. Ronald Tubid added 17 points, KG Canaleta contributed 15 and Dacia had 11.

The scores:

WUNNERWAY-CHINA 102—Yu Liang 25, Guo Ye 21, Zhang Zhe 20, Chan 14, Ji Le 14, Su Wei 8, Qu Shao Bin 0, Zhang Hong 0, Ba Zhichao 0, Wang Zheng 0.

RP-AIR21 87—Avenido 18, Tubid 17, Canaleta 15, Dacia 11, Se 8, Telan 7, Bernardo 6, Padilla 5.

Quarters: 26-24, 50-47, 71-62, 102-87

IPT NORTH AMERICAN TILT

Lining, Luat advance, but Parica bows out

FILIPINO ANTONIO LINING SWEPT HIS FOUR MATCHES IN his group and advanced to the next level of the money-rich International Pool Tour 2006 North American 8-Ball Championships which started at the Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada, over the weekend.

The 2006 Japan Open champion, who hails from Pinamalayan, Oriental Mindoro, crushed the first 8-ball Pan-American Champion Aaron "The Baron" Franken (8-2) of Aruba, Sammy Jones (8-1) and Tony Robles (8-4) of the United States and Evgeny Stalev (8-6) of Russia.

Lining placed second behind eventual winner compatriot Ronato Alcano in the IPT qualification tournament last month at the Lou Butera's Pool Sharks in Las Vegas.

Rodolfo Luat also advanced along with Canada-based Filipino Edwin Montal with identical 3-1 win-loss records.

But Filipino pool legend Jose "Amang" Parica bowed out with a 1-3 win-loss record in Group 30, which was topped by the undefeated Rafael Martinez of Mexico.

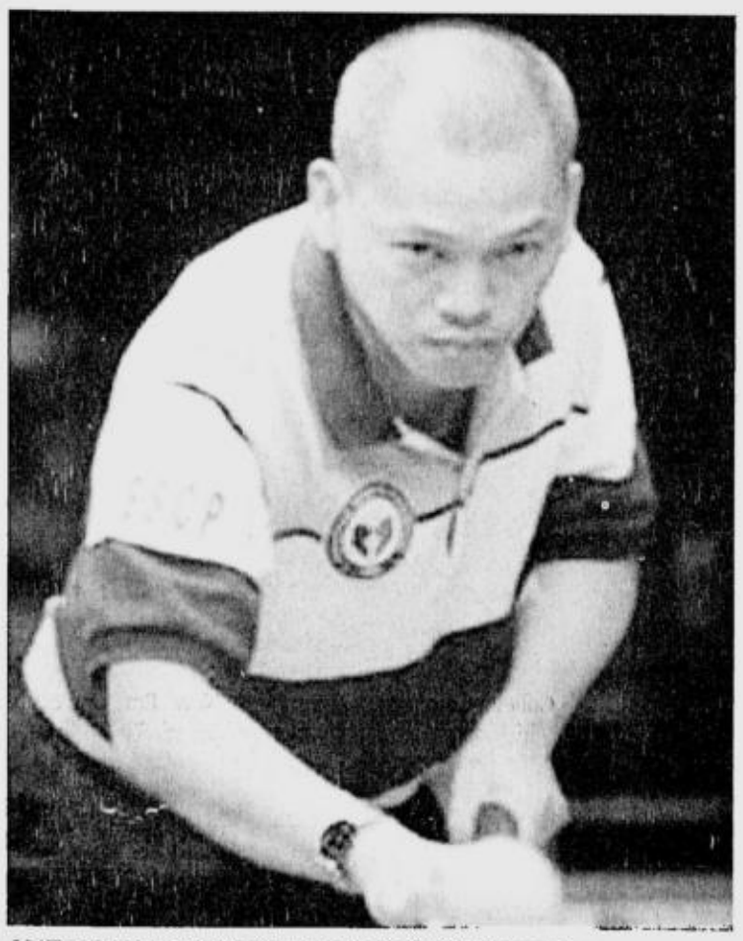
Luat qualified from Group 27 behind Vilmos Foldes of Hungary, who nipped the Filipino, 8-7. Montal made it from Group 35 as he tied with Marcus Chamat of Sweden and Markus Juva of Finland.

Lining, Luat and Montal are assured of winning $5,000 each while the West Covina, California-based Parica picked up the consolation prize of $2,000.

Aside from Parica, other RP seeded players in the 200-man main draw are Efren "Bata" Reyes, Francisco "Django" Bustamante and Marlon "Marvelous" Manalo, who were scheduled to play in their respective brackets yesterday.

Reyes, the 2006 SMB Asian 9-ball tour Vietnam leg winner, who is hoping to become the first player to reach the finals of the rich event for the second straight year, is in Group 9 along with 2004 US Open champion American Gabe Owen, Mary Kenniston and James Walden of the US and Luis Condo of United Kingdom.

Bustamante and Manalo, who finished third and fourth, in the finals of the 2005 King of the Hill, are in Group 10 and 12, respectively. *Marlon Bernardino*



ANTONIO LINING finds mark in his first four matches.

Meralco shuttlers dominate Dunlop tilt

MERALCO AND PHILIPPINE Star triumphed as expected Sunday to retain their respective titles in the fourth Sporthouse Dunlop Corporate Invitational Badminton Cup at the Atrium Building of SM Megamall.

With the reliable Alex Cuevas and Rey Selga at the helm, Meralco blanked Celestron, 3-0, to win the Corporate Classic title for the second straight year, a feat duplicated later in the day by Star.

The Starmen denied Meralco a twin kill by scoring a 3-1 win in the Corporate Masters division of the week-long tournament organized by former Olympian Weena Lim, sanctioned by the Philippine Badminton Association and sponsored by Sportshouse and Dunlop Slazenger Group.

The Celebrity title went to Angelu de Leon and Antonio Aquitania, who defeated the pair of Ruby Rodriguez and Randy Santiago, to complete a four-game sweep of the division that featured leading movie and television stars.

Star struck through Casey Ang-Siy and Dalia Santiago in the ladies' 21 to 34 years category, Marife Durana and Jhona Magnaye in the 35 and above division and Brandon Chan and Ricky Morales in the men's 35 and above as it finished the tournament unbeaten.

As expected, Cuevas and Selga prevented Star from sweeping the best-of-five tie when they beat Martin Araneta and William Gabuelo, 24-21, 22-20, in the day's most interesting match.

Winning for Meralco in the Masters were Kathleen Anasco and Dianah Barbo, who defeated Princess Ruth Moldogo and Beverly Banatlao, 21-13, 21-14; Selga and Cuevas, who downed Joseph Cagitla And Al Masakayan, 21-15, 21-5, and Ger Solidum and Flor Vivas, who whitewashed Bamby de Vera and Joan Fineza, 21-0, 21-0.

Tiger's royal encore: World No. 1 wins 11th 'major'

From page A21

Woods followed with another low, penetrating iron into 8 feet on the 14th for a birdie. And after DiMarco scrambled for a birdie on the 16th to keep his hopes alive, Woods answered with an 8-foot birdie at No. 15.

Woods finished at 18-under 270, missing an 8-foot birdie putt that would have matched his record (19 under) set at St. Andrews six years ago.

His father was with him for his first taste of links golf in the 1995 Scottish Amateur at Carnoustie, when Woods was a 19-year-old amateur. As he walked up the 18th fairway with a two-shot lead, his ball safely behind the green, memories of Dad poured forth.

For DiMarco, his third runner-up finish in the last eight majors came with a consolation prize. He earned enough Ryder Cup points to move from No. 21 to No. 6 in the standings, virtually making him a lock to be on the US team in Ireland two months from now.

Ernie Els, among three players who started the day one shot behind, was the only one to catch him. He couldn't keep up with Woods, lost ground to DiMarco and had to settle for a 1-under 71 to finish alone in third at 275.

Jim Furyk birdied two of the last three holes for a 71 and fourth place.

Masters champion Phil Mickelson finished before the leaders even began the final round. He was never a factor during the weekend and closed with a 70 to finish 13 shots behind.

Still, the biggest slide belonged to Sergio Garcia. He closed with a 73.

It was Woods' 49th career victory, and the $1.3 million for first place put him atop the money list and pushed him over $60 million for his career. The next stop for Woods is the PGA Championship at Medinah, Chicago.

Woods now has three British Open titles, the same as Nicklaus, and his victory at Hoylake carried another comparison.

What would Earl Woods have thought of this victory?

"He would have been very proud," Woods said. "He was always on my case about thinking my way around the golf course and not letting emotions get the better of you." AP

US-BOUND: Athens Olympian Jasmin Figueroa (right) sees off US-bound Leira Balinas (left) and Anna Mariel Enrile-Inton who will compete in the National Target Archery Championships in Colorado.

Pasa to boost talent base in Youth Swim

HOUNDED BY GAPS IN THE DEvelopment program, the Philippine Amateur Swimming Association admits it may take some time to develop the next great Filipino swimmer.

"It's a black hole," said Pasa president Mark Joseph. "The ones next in line are not as good as Miguel Molina. It's the Fil-Ams who do well because they have a continuous and stable program in the US."

The 21-year-old Molina is ranked 14th in the world in the 200-meter individual medley. A student at the University of California-Berkeley, Molina emerged as the most bemedaled Filipino with three individual golds and a silver, plus a bronze in the team event in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

Joseph, though, plans to set a clear direction this year by launching the Philippine Youth Swimming Cup in September.

"There's a gap in the development program," said Joseph in a press conference yesterday. "So the goal will be to increase the base of swimmers. The focus is on talent identification."

Through the event, Joseph says Pasa also aims to develop more versatile swimmers. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Why RP will win world's richest billiards tourney

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

I AGREE WITH THE FEARLESS FORECAST that a Filipino will win again this year's blue-ribbon $2 million International Pool Tour (IPT) 8-Ball Championship which got going Monday (Tuesday in Manila) at the Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada.

First of all, the Philippines is fielding one of the strongest teams ever assembled for a world-class tournament, with defending champion Efren "Bata" Reyes, who won the IPT event last year in Orlando, Florida, himself leading the all-star delegation. Also in the team are former world No. 1 Francisco "Django" Bustamante, marvelous Marlon Manalo, US-based Jose "Amang" Parica, once considered the best Filipino pool player before Reyes and Bustamante hogged the spotlight; Canada-based Alex Pagulayan, who won the 2004 World Pool Championship in Kaohsiung, Taiwan; Dennis Orcullo, Ronnie Alcano, Warren Kiamco, Rodolfo Luat, Antonio Lining, Santos Sambajon and Gandy Valle.

Set for July 23-30 in Las Vegas, the IPT event, also known in billiards circles as the North American 8-Ball Championship, stakes the richest prize pot in billiards history with first prize at $350,000 (roughly P18.5 million); second prize, $99,000; and third prize, $80,000.

Reyes, who will be 52 years old on Aug. 26, won last year's IPT event by beating American idol Mike Sigel in the finals. The Puyat Sports mainstay pocketed $200,000, the biggest single purse of his checkered career.

"I think my chances of winning again (in Las Vegas) are good," said Reyes, a native of Angeles City, in a recent interview. "Pray for us."

The Philippines is represented by a formidable combination of youth and experience. Reyes, Bustamante and Parica will provide the mature leadership while Pagulayan, Manalo and Orcullo will banner the young contenders.

In my view, our players will more than hold their own against their rivals from the United States, Europe and other Asian countries. They have traveled far and wide, played in many tough international tournaments, defeating many of the world's best and brightest in the process.

Needless to say, Reyes is the most dominant cue artist among the local pros. He is also considered by many as the greatest player billiards ever had. Often called "The Magician" for making mincemeat of his opponents with his spectacular shots and safeties, Reyes is already enshrined in the Billiard Congress of America Hall of Fame. He made the country proud in 1994 when he became the first non-American winner of the prestigious US Open. Among other achievements, Reyes is also a three-time world 8-ball champion, a Southeast Asian Games gold medal winner in Jakarta in 1987 and Brunei in 1999, World Pool champion in 1999, the same year he was named PSA (Philippine Sportswriters Association) Athlete of the Year; and recipient of the Philippine Legion of Honor. Last May, he won the opening leg in Vietnam of this year's four-leg San Miguel Beer Asian 9-Ball Tour, although he lost to 2005 World Pool winner Wu Chia-ching of Chinese-Taipei in an SMB Asian 9-Ball Tour exhibition event in China last week.

* * *

GIANTS HUNGRIER, MORE AGGRESSIVE: One reason why Purefoods Chunkee Giants of coach Ryan Gregorio emerged victorious in the just-ended PBA Philippine Cup is because they were simply hungrier. The Giants also played aggressively in the best-of-7 series, especially in Game 6 on Friday when they outclassed the never-say-die Red Bull, 90-83, to wrap up the nail-biting finals, 4 games to 2. It was the fourth All-Filipino title and the seventh overall for Purefoods and the first for the rejuvenated Jun Limpot, a 14-year veteran of the play-for-pay league.

Sweet-shooting James Yap, who earlier won the Most Valuable Player award; Kerby Raymundo, Noy Castillo and vastly improved Marc Pingris, who won the finals MVP, played key roles in Game 6 where Purefoods got the better breaks. The victory was also a fitting gift to Purefoods team manager Rene Pardo, who is retiring this December.

On the other hand, losing Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao should not sulk because overall, the Photokina franchise did not fare so badly in this conference. Finishing second is impressive enough, *di ba?*...PUBLIC SERVICE. Parents and students, including school officials of St. Paul's College of Bocaue, are appealing to the authorities concerned to repair the potholes, a major cause of traffic gridlock along Igolot Road leading to the school. This plea is addressed specifically to Bocaue Mayor Apen de la Cruz, who is known as a man of action.

Macasieb sets new Ironman nat'l mark

FILIPINO-AMERICAN TRIATHLETE ARLAND Macasieb set a new Philippine record in the 8th Ford Ironman World Championships in Lake Placid, New York, last Sunday.

The 30-year old Macasieb clocked 10 hours 37 minutes and 18 seconds, nearly 18 minutes faster than the old 10:55 RP mark that Alvin Alindo set six years ago in the grueling 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike, 26.2-mile run race.

Based in Clifton, New Jersey, Macasieb was one of the best finishers from Asia at 157th.

Victor Zyemtsev of Ukraine timed 8:38:18 to emerge champion in the race that attracted 2,159 competitors from around the world.

Tom Evans of Canada placed second in 8:39:12 while Rudger Beke of Belgium was third in 8:46:44.

Macasieb ranked 88th in the swim leg at 56:05 minutes. But the exercise physiologist had a tougher time in the next two courses, finishing 163rd in the bike event (5:43:21) and 157th in the run leg (3:49:14).

A triathlon bronze medalist in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games, Macasieb is training for the Doha Asiad this December. *Jasmine W. Payo*

DE VILLA: Two shots off the pace in rain-marred penultimate round.

2 RP jungolf bets running 2nd in Florida

FLORIDA—MIGUEL TABUENA BOGEYED the last hole and dropped to second in the boys' 11-12 division going into the final round of the Optimist International junior golf championships at the PGA National Golf Club in Palm Beach Gardens Sunday.

The 11-year-old Tabuena, playing out of International School, had the lead with a one-under card through 14 holes but stumbled with two bogeys on the last four holes for a one-over-par 73 and a two-day aggregate of 144.

Tabuena trailed Guillermo Pereira of Chile and Zachary Martin of North Carolina, who shot a 71 and 74, respectively, to share top spot at 143.

Debbie de Villa was also running second in the girls' 14-15 years before play was suspended. The reigning Philippine Ladies Open champ had an even-par card through nine holes that brought her within two shots off Thai Yupaporn.

Andie Unson remained in fifth place in the girls' 10-11 despite a one-under-par 71, Maan Legaspi slid to sixth in the girls' 12-13 and Jikjik Abdon ballooned to a 77 in the boys' 14-15 play, which was also suspended. Chris Jordan Mamaril was at one over through nine holes.

TABUENA: I behind

Unson was at 143, 11 shots behind Julie Yang of Arizona (67-132). Legaspi (74-147) trailed Victoria Tanco of Argentina by 12.

Tabuena was one over through 11 holes but he birdied the 12th and 14th to wrest control. He remained in the lead despite a bogey on the 15th but had to yield control on the 18th with another bogey even as Pereira closed out with a birdie.

Saluday, Delada seek lightweight crown tonight

DAPITAN CITY—AN EXCITING 12-ROUND showdown takes place tonight when No. 2 lightweight Christopher Saluday faces third-ranked Dexter Delada for the vacant Philippine title at Gloria De Dapitan in this city.

The fight headlines the "Double Trouble" card put up by Bullet Jalosjos, in coordination with Rex "Wakee" Salud International, with the support of Gloria de Dapitan, San Miguel Beer, Mayor Jun Jalosjos and Gov. Rolando Yebes.

Saluday and Delada were well within the weight limit of 135 lbs when they tipped the scales at Dapitan City's Powerhouse Gym yesterday under the supervision of GAB's Carlos Almirante. Saluday came in at 133 lbs while Delada checked in at 132.

In the co-feature, Cebu's Wyndel Janiola (108) takes on Davao's Philip Parcon (106) for the PBF light flyweight crown in a 10-round clash. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*

SSC Baycats overpower Holy Angel; PLP wins

NEWCOMER SAN SEBASTIAN COLLEGE-CAVITE immediately made its presence felt in the 2006 National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities basketbal tournament, crushing Holy Angel University, 69-49, Saturday at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Glen Bolocon and John Cenita provided the 1-2 scoring punch for the Baycats, who led all the way. Bolocon scored 13 points while Cenita added 12.

Sharing the limelight were Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasay, which subdued Centro Escolar University, 77-72; AMA Computer University, which downed St. Clare College-Caloocan, 67-50; and New Era University, which outsteadied University of Makati, 83-73.

In junior play, defending champion University of Manila demolished Better Child of St Clare Montessori Center (BCSCMC), 65-42, at the UM gym to launch its title retention bid on a high note.

Last year's runner-up St Clare ripped AMA, 75-66, and New Era routed University of Makati, 101-64.

Venancio Galindez, Roy David and Mark Tayer combined for 34 points for the Eagles, who outscored the Scorpions in the final two quarters.

The scores:

First Game

PLP 77—Galindez 15, David 14, Tayer 10, Casulla 8, Carino 7, Anticuado 7, Pascual 4, Soriano 3, Go-Bon 3, Untalasco 2.

CEU 72—June Macasaet 15, Eddie Camacho 12, Duyag 11, Gatdula 11, Manajero 8, Magno 7, Carillo 5,Franco 2, Salamat 1, Lalota 0.

Quarters: 21-19, 38-43, 52-55, 77-72

Second Game

SSC-C 69—Bolocon 13, Cenita 12, Gracilla 8, Villaver 7, Panes 6, Basa 6 Villareal 4, Angub 3, Sabejon 3, Maconocido 2, Echavez 2, Saquilayan 2, Hatague 1, Villanueva 0, Pasagui 0, Alcasabas 0.

HAU 49—Manarang 14, Francisco 7, Arevallo 3, Garcia 3, Camu 3,Culzon 3, Tungol 3, Angosta 2, Morales 2, Lansang 2, Chua 1.

Quarters: 14-11, 33-21, 57-35, 69-49

Third Game

AMACU 67—Jaime 20, Abac 15, De Guzman 9, Mercado 8, Vergara 6, Suarez 2, Padilla 2, Galang 2, Gabica 2, Edralin 1, Zablan 0, Galvez 0.

ST. CLARE 50—Manio 10, Geraldino 8, Dizon 5, Cabral 4, Pancho 4, Maningo 4, Badiey 4, Diswe 3, Pascua 3, Coronel 3, Buquid 2.

Quarters: 18-12, 33-24, 50-40, 67-50

P1-M Hold 'em poker qualifying tilt Saturday

THE FIRST OF SEVERAL QUALIFYING TOURNAMENTS IN the 2nd Million-Peso Poker Hold 'em Philippine Championship gets under way on Saturday at the Casino Filipino-Tagaytay.

Registration starts at 12 p.m., or two hours before the start of the tournament.

The winners in the qualifying tournaments will earn berths in the Grand Finals, passes to future qualifying tournaments and cash prizes. The certificates are transferable.

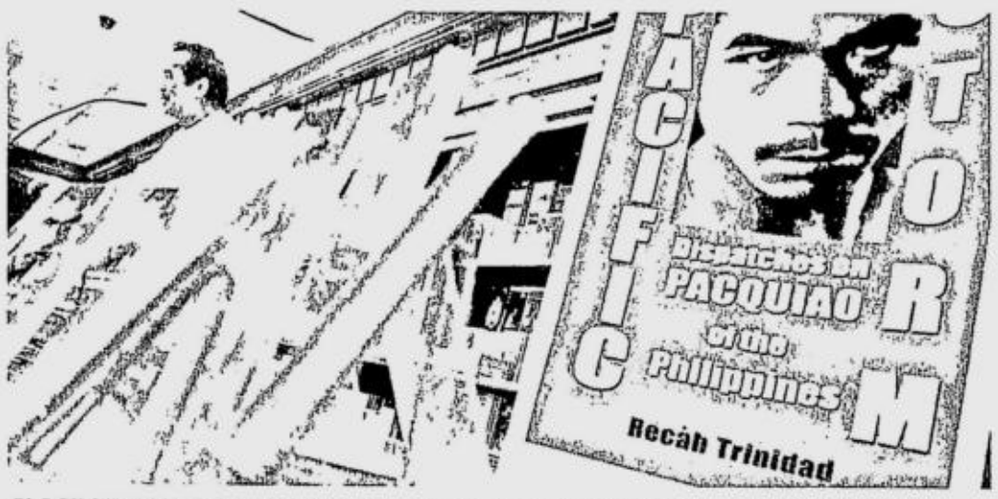
The main draw, slated Dec. 16-17 at Casino Filipino-Pavilion, offers P1 million and a champion's bracelet to the winner.

Players can vie in the Grand Finals without going through the qualifying tournaments by paying a registration fee of P30,000.

Qualifying and satellite tournaments are scattered from the last week of July to the first week of December at different Casino Filipino branches nationwide.

Derek Bautista, a businessman based in Baguio City, was last year's champion. He is expected to defend his title.

For details, please contact the organizing Philippine Poker Tour secretariat at 8179092 and 8120153 cindy or visit the official website, www.philippinepokertour.com



CLOSE-UP ON PACQUIAO: Philippine Daily Inquirer roving editor and veteran sports columnist Recah Trinidad speaks at the launch of his book, "Pacific Storm: Dispatches on Pacquiao of the Philippines," recently. The book, presented by INQUIRER Books and published by Anvil Publishing Inc., is available at all National Bookstore outlets. EDWIN BACASMAS

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Ort/Tri)—Magic Bullet (7), Sir Lawrence (4), Assunta de Rio (2), Golden Africa (8)

Race 2—(Penta/Tri/Ort)—Superamerica (5), Tonic Water (7), Royal Academy (10), Baling Ganda (3), Selfmade (1)

Race 3—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Collective Dreams (5), Air Power (11), Jubilee (2), Rivaldo (8), Brazen Truth (7)

Race 4—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Landed Visa (1), Verdadera (6), Sweet Luvin (11), Kryptonite (7), Handsome Tino (14)

Race 5—(Ort/Tri)—El Od (5), Can And Will (7), Maglaw (6) Yonder Girl (8)

Race 6—(Pentafecta/Ort/Tri)—Rivendel (2), Vantago (7), Yukozuma (5), Real Black (8), Casanova (12)

Race 7—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Desert Breeze (2), Shifty (9), Mesmerize (5), Morning Nail (4), Princess Dancer (3)

Race 8—(Super 6/Ort/Tri)—Dona None (10), Tiger Raffy (9), Odyssey (8), Bunker Buster (2), Irish Connection (13), Cartada Nueva (6)

SPORTSWATCH

Southwoods' 'Master Challenge' slated

TUCKED PINS, HEAVY ROUGH, TREACHEROUS GREENS AND NUMEROUS water hazards await the participants in the 2006 "Master's Challenge" on Friday at the newly renovated championship course of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club in Carmona, Cavite. The tournament, organized by the MSGCC Ladies Team in cooperation with China Bank, Asian Hospital, Mejore, IDC, Dee Concrete Inc., and Butuan Doctors' Hospital, should provide a true test of golf. A hole-in-one prize of P100,000 and merchandize prizes are at stake. For tickets, call Manila Southwoods at (046) 430-0269.

Celebrity swingers set Golf for God

TEEING OFF TAKES ON A WHOLE NEW MEANING AS MOVIE AND TELEVision stars prepare for the 2nd Oasis of Love Celebrity Golf Classic on Aug. 17 at the Malarayat Golf and Country Club. Oasis of Love head servant Christopher de Leon said his they expect participants from the television, media, advertising and marketing fields to play in the tournament and help the group's efforts to "change the lives of people in meaningful ways." The event will be shown on Solar Sports. Joey 92.3 FM is the official broadcaster.

Mild Seven F1 Club hosts viewing party

MILD SEVEN RENAULT FORMULA OONE DRIVERS FERNANDO ALONSO and Giancarlo Fisichella are set to reclaim the top spots this weekend as the Formula One season comes to the grueling Hockenheimring for the German Grand Prix. F1 fans can catch the German GP at the Mild Seven F1 Club viewing party on Sunday at Aruba Bar in Metrowalk, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City. It is open to all race enthusiasts 18 years old and above.

SJC 5-cock derby resumes today

THE 289-ENTRY "RAMBULAN SA SAN JUAN" 5-COCK DERBY RESUMES at 4 p.m. today at San Juan Coliseum with the last round of eliminations. Today's 70-fight program is sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Seeing action today are cockers from Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Bulacan, Rizal, Quezon Province, Masbate, Negros Occidental and Iloilo. So far, 36 participants with two points each have entered the finals set this Saturday. Those with 1 and 1.5 points will see action on Thursday. Meanwhile, promoter Bobbit Ples will host the P500,000 "Pahabol Sa Taglugon" 4-cock derby on Aug. 2.

SPORTS

Astounding turnaround paves way to triumph

PARIS—THE CRAZIEST TOUR DE FRANCE IN MEMory ended Sunday the same way the last seven had: with an American wearing the yellow jersey, this time with a Landis instead of a Lance.

After stunning feats of willpower and woeful cracks of concentration, Floyd Landis' arthritic hip held up and he held on for the ceremonial ride over the cobblestones of the Champs-Elysees.

"I kept fighting, never stopped believing," Landis said after leaving the winner's podium with his daughter, Ryan.

But plenty of race fans surely had their doubts, especially after his wild ride in the Alps last week.

Landis had tried to apply Armstrong's meticulous strategy for winning, but that went awry when he flat out cracked in the final climb of Stage 16 on Wednesday, giving up a lead and falling 8 minutes, 8 seconds behind Spain's Oscar Pereiro.

All but written off, he managed a stunning rebound the very next day in the last mountain stage, pedaling like a mad man and closing the gap to 30 seconds.

So astounding was the turnaround that race director Jean-Marie Leblanc, who has overseen this event 18 years, called it "the best performance in the modern history of the Tour."

The comeback was read by many as a master stroke, instantly enshrining Landis in cycling's pantheon alongside greats like five-time Tour champion Eddy Merckx of Belgium for his show of both human frailty and superhuman courage in the span of 24 hours.

The 30 seconds put Landis, who hails from eastern Pennsylvania's Dutch country, in position to win by outpacing Pereiro in the final time trial Saturday.

And by the time he was done, the race was reborn—injected with the drama and swashbuckling flavor of years past. *AP*

Landis victory restores Tour glory

FLOYD Landis clenches his fist during the honor lap. AFP

PARIS—FLOYD LANDIS' THRILLING TOUR DE FRANCE VICTORY DID much to dispel the air of gloom hanging over cycling's showpiece event after it began engulfed by another doping controversy.

"Our only favorite is named suspense," said outgoing Tour director Jean-Marie Leblanc, dreaming of a wide-open race after the retirement of Lance Armstrong who held the Tour in his grip for seven years.

His wish was granted as the race remained unpredictable until the 19th of the 20 stages run over 3,653 kms in scorching heat, save a few drops of rain in Brittany.

The yellow jersey changed shoulders a record 10 times and had seven holders. American Landis claimed it three times and lost it three times before securing it decisively in the penultimate stage.

The 30-year-old son of a Mennonite family from Lancaster county in Pennsylvania also produced one of the greatest efforts in the race's history when he won the last mountain stage from Saint-Jean de Maurienne to Morzine.

"Floyd went like an eagle on the first climb and against that you can't do anything," said Spanish rider Carlos Sastre, no mean climber himself.

Leblanc's successor Christian Prudhomme added: "Landis's performance not only left its mark on the 2006 Tour, it also left its mark on the whole history of the race." Landis Phonak team director John Lelangue was also instrumental in raising the intensity of the race.

"Lelangue brought a lot of freshness to the race. He persuaded Landis it was possible to attack from the start of the stage and resurrected fairy-tale cycling, old fashioned cycling, mythical cycling," Prudhomme said.

"When the action is of such quality, it can only delight media, supporters, organisers," added Leblanc.

Before ending in euphoria, the race had to survive the biggest doping scandal since the Festina affair which rocked the 1998 Tour and brought cycling to its knees.

On the eve of the prologue, pre-race favorites Ivan Basso of Italy and German Jan Ullrich were forced to pull out and were suspended after being named in a doping investigation in Spain.

Ullrich, winner of 1997 Tour, and Basso, who was eyeing a Giro-Tour de France double, both denied any wrongdoing. Ullrich was later sacked by his T-Mobile sponsor while teammate Oscar Sevilla and manager Rudy Pevenage were suspended.

AG2R rider Francisco Mancebo, fourth in last year's race, was another rider to be withdrawn by his team. A whole team, Astana-Wuerth, led by Alexandre Vinokourov, had to quit.

The peloton was reduced from 21 to 20 teams and from 189 to 176 riders. The race started without the top five riders from 2005.

"It was not a calamitous start," Leblanc pleaded in his summing-up press conference on the eve of the last parade on the Champs-Elysees. *Reuters*

US president calls champ

WASHINGTON — PRESIDENT GEORGE W. Bush called the latest American winner of the Tour de France, Floyd Landis, on Sunday afternoon to congratulate him and invite him to the White House.

"Must feel great," Bush told the cyclist, who rode with an injured hip. "Everybody's proud of you. You showed amazing strength and courage."

Landis plans to undergo surgery this fall on the arthritic right hip, injured in a 2003 crash, and said he hoped he would be able to compete in the race again next year.

Landis picked up where another American left off last year, when Lance Armstrong completed his seventh Tour win. *AP*

Blake breaks Roddick's American reign

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA—JAMES Blake will move to a career-best world No. 5 ranking Monday after winning the duel for American tennis supremacy with a victory over Andy Roddick in the final of the Indianapolis Open.

The affable Blake, who a year ago stood 107th in the rankings, rallied for a 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7/5) victory to beat his poker-playing buddy Roddick for the second time in a month.

After six straight losses to Roddick dating to 2002, Blake made a breakthrough on grass in the Queen's club semi-finals in June, with Roddick subsequently failing to get past the third round at Wimbledon.

Despite his success in an Indianapolis final lasting just over two hours, the humble Blake refused to concede he's the best of the US men.

"Andy played well, I just got lucky on some break points," said the player who added another 2006 title to the ones he earned in Sydney and Las Vegas.

"I made my first serves and played some of my best tennis when I needed it. But I'm glad to see that the 'old' Andy is back," he said of his former world No. 1 Davis Cup teammate who has scratched back to 10th in the world by reaching the final.

"Andy's playing with confidence, playing unbelievably. I believe in him, he's the No. 1 seed in my book." But Blake can also revel in his own accomplishments as he builds up for the US Open in a month.

"This is one of the best finals I've ever played," Blake said. "I played my best tennis, it's very satisfying to have done it in the final.

"Andy and I wanted to prove that US tennis is back now," added Blake. "We're back on our surface now and we want to do well going into the US Open and hopefully for the rest of the year.

"I like the ways that things are going." Blake never gave up, despite being swamped in the first set, getting a break in the final game of the second set and saving five break points in the third to eventually take victory in a tiebreaker.

Roddick was unable to make a winning impression despite 17 aces and 41 winners. Blake struck 15 aces while saving ten break points.

"Today I had to play my best tennis," said Blake, who now reigns as the top-ranked American. "It's crazy what confidence will do. Everything seems to be going my way at the moment." *AFP*

JAMES Blake: Breakthrough on grass. AP

Baldomir looks for juicy pot

ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY — No one should have trouble remembering — or pronouncing — Carlos Baldomir's name anymore.

Certainly not after the Argentine journeyman's ninth-round knockout of Arturo Gatti on Saturday night in the first defense of Baldomir's WBC welterweight title.

If the 35-year-old Baldomir was largely a mystery before he upset Zab Judah earlier this year, his domination of Gatti put him solidly on the map — and put him in line for the biggest payday of his long and mostly anonymous career.

"Monday we start negotiations with everybody," said Glenn Quiroga, president of Sycuan Ringside Productions, which represents Baldomir.

That could entail several possibilities, including fights with Ricky "Hitman" Hatton, the WBA welterweight champ, or WBO champ Antonio Margarito. Then there is the specter of undefeated Floyd Mayweather Jr., considered one of the world's best kilo-for-kilo fighters — though he doesn't currently own a belt in the welterweight division.

Baldomir made no secret after Saturday's fight that he has his eye on Mayweather. He also had a message for him. *AP*

NEW RP bowling team coach Stoney Edward Brown (third from left, seated) with Rey Reyes, Sherwin Tee, acting PBC president Jaime C. Dychauco, PNC management committee chair Bong Coo and Gene Tonolete (seated from left) and national pool members.

US pro is new RP bowling coach

A 34-YEAR-OLD AMERICAN PRO BOWLER, STONEY Edward Brown, has been tapped by the Philippine Bowling Congress to coach the Philippine team in the Doha Asian Games this December.

Brown has a 25-year bowling experience, 15 as a competitor and the rest as coach. Twice grand champion of the Oregon Bowling Association Championships and a member of the United States Bowling Congress, Brown boasts a 242 average, 40 sanctioned 800 series and 300 perfect games.

"When coaching, my goal is to make bowling easy on the body, and simplify the movement for easier repetition," says Brown.

"I believe hard work gets the job done. For any bowler who needs extra help, I will stay extra hours to 'work with them and spend time together with my assistant coaches to schedule practice sessions so that we will all be coaching alike to achieve our ultimate goal of winning gold medals for the Philippines."

Acting PBC president Jaime C. Dychauco was instrumental in hiring Brown.

"He's highly recommended," says Dychauco of the American, who has been in the top five of the World Team Challenge five times and twice made the Oregon Bowler Association All-Star squad.

Brown will be supported by assistant coach Sherwin Tee and trainers Rey Reyes and Gene Tonolete in preparing the Filipinos for the Doha Asiad.

Rollins clinches BC Open plum with 64

VERONA, NEW York—John Rollins birdied the final hole to complete a scorching 64 here Sunday and win the three million-dollar BC Open.

ROLLINS

One of four players in the top six who closed with a 64, Rollins avoided a playoff with Bob May and earned a two-year PGA Tour exemption with his first victory since the 2002 Canadian Open.

"To now have two wins, it is a validation feel," said Rollins, who has been on the PGA Tour since 1997. "You know now that you have won multiple times, so it is not like a one-time fluke.

In his previous PGA Tour win, Rollins defeated Justin Leonard and Neal Lancaster in a playoff.

He arrived at the 598-yard 18th hole knowing he needed a birdie to avoid a playoff with May, who had just birdied the hole himself.

Rollins nearly reached the green in two and two-putted from the fringe, knocking in a five-footer for the win.

A smattering of players took advantage of the faltering Gabriel Hjertstedt, the 1997 champion who began the day with a one-shot lead over three players.

Hjertstedt couldn't match the low scores produced by many and finished four shots back.

Rollins began the day three strokes adrift but played bogey-free golf at the Turning Stone Resort's Atunyote Course. *AFP*

Rodriguez Yankees' fall guy

NEW YORK—HE IS BASEBALL'S $25-million man and arguably the game's greatest player, yet Alex Rodriguez is the target of frustrated New York fans who are booing his every failure at Yankee Stadium. The slumping Rodriguez, the highest paid player ever with his 10-year, $252-million contract, is the fall guy for the travails of the second-place Yankees, a victim of great expectations from without and within. "The fans have some great expectancies from me and I expect a lot from myself," the third baseman known as A-Rod said after a recent game. *Reuters*

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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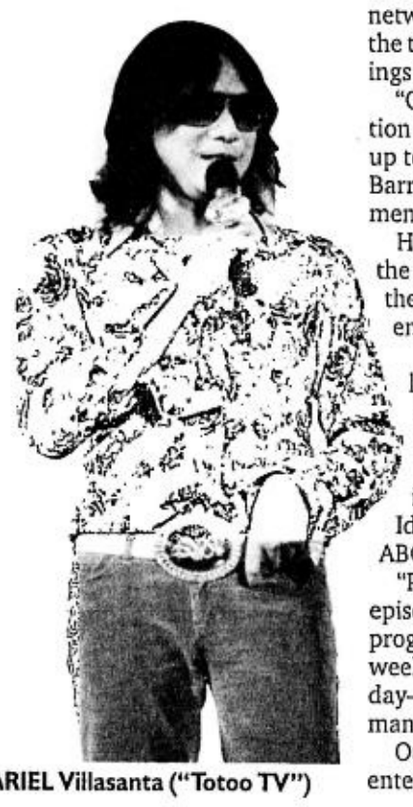
Lavish party to announce ABC 5 is a serious player

'Philippine Idol' puts us squarely in competition'

JOEY DE LEON



ARIEL Villasanta ("Totoo TV")

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

ABC 5 SPENT MORE THAN A million pesos for the lavish "Idol Maging Iba" party that it hosted last Wednesday, according to Roberto "Bobby" Barreiro, managing director for News and Entertainment.

The event, held at the Manila Diamond Hotel, was part of the network's bid to compete with the two current leaders in the ratings game, GMA 7 and ABS-CBN.

"Our corporate affairs, production and events groups teamed up to make this event a success," Barreiro told INQUIRER Entertainment on Saturday.

Highlight of the evening was the launch of the local version of the phenomenally popular talent search, "American Idol."

"We have other programs lined up, but I don't think there is another show in the world that's bigger than 'Idol,'" said Barriero. "The intention is for 'Philippine Idol' to be *the* one that will put ABC 5 squarely in competition."

"Philippine Idol" airs its pilot episode on July 30 at 8 p.m. The program will be aired twice a week—Saturday and Sunday—when it gets to the performance and results phases.

Other shows presented to the entertainment media during the party were "Teka Mona," "Shall We Dance?," "Todo Max," "Totoo TV," "SOS: Stories of Survival," "Ultimate Guinness World Records" and "Ripley's Believe it or Not."

Barreiro was especially keen on the network's newest telenovela, "Letty la mas Fea," Mexican version of the Columbian hit series, "Betty la Fea."

"'Betty' became so successful even in Mexico, the mecca of telenovelas, that the Mexicans decided to make their own version," he explained.

DOMINIC Ochoa, Regine Tolentino, Edna Ledesma and Arnell Ignacio, hosts and judges of "Shall We Dance?"

RYAN Cayabyab, Francis Magalona and Arnell Ignacio

ALI Sotto and Maverick Relova

Barreiro said a US-based production outfit also bought the rights to air "Letty," and Hollywood actress Salma Hayek is said to be behind it. "This is something new, especially since Filipino viewers are so used to watching soap series in Korean and Taiwanese," he said.

The program at the Diamond Ballroom began with a song-and-dance number by Audie Gemora, Regine Tolentino and Edna Ledesma, judges of the reality dance contest "Shall We Dance?"

Hosts of other ABC 5 shows who helped pick out the raffle winners were: Joey de Leon ("Teka Mona"), Ali Sotto ("Ali"), Maverick and Ariel ("Totoo TV"), Lucy Torres-Gomez and Dominic Ochoa ("Shall We Dance?"), and Benjie Paras ("Guinness").

'Press Idol'

Gladys Guevarra ("Todo Max") and show biz columnist Jobert Sucaldito hosted the event.

Fourteen entertainment writers joined "Press Idol," a singing contests patterned after "Philippine Idol."

Judges Ryan Cayabyab, Francis Magalona and Arnell Ignacio (replacing Pilita Corrales, who is on a US tour) declared Ronnie Carrasco winner. Carrasco won P10,000 and a trip for two to Cebu.

Maridol Rañoa-Bismark won the grand raffle prize—an appliance showcase.

Other prizes were microwave ovens, DVD players and Wow Magic Sing (karaoke) microphones. All guests were treated to a sumptuous buffet and goodie bags.

How 'debt' is your love?

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Ann Carvajal

GUESS WHO THIS SEXY ACTRESS IS? SHE has a credit line with a ritzy store. She used to be a good customer until she went overboard. Her balance has reached P3 million! Has she lost her balance because of too much love?

The P3M worth of gift checks she signed were all given to the mom of her actor-boyfriend. The staff of the store has traced the control numbers of the GCs that the actor's ma spend, charged to the actress' account. How "debt" is her love?

Clue: The actress is voluptuous (and so is the sum of her credit).

Ohhh gee, Ogie!

IT'S ALWAYS a delight to be around Ogie Alcasid. His warmth is genuine. Things are never "showbiz-ized" between us. Our friendship has a mark of its own. So what's supposed to be an interview ends up being a heartwarming chat between friends.

Ogie is all agog preparing for his birthday concert, "Komikonsiyerto," on Aug. 5 at the Aliw Theater (call 819-9999 for tickets). The concert will showcase his versatility both as a hit maker and comedian. His guests include Michael V, Wendell Ramos, Francine Prieto, Ruffa Mae Quinto and Lovi Poe.

"For me, it's harder to make people laugh with my antics than to move them with my songs. It's my birthday gift to myself to try to do both for my fans during the concert."

Dream cruise

OGIE'S turning 39. He laughs and says, "One more year to explore before I hit the big four-oh! It has always been my dream to invite my close friends for a cruise on my birthday. We'll just sail off wherever the wind takes us!"

He has sailed the turbulent waters of intrigue for so long, that he has become immune to them already. "For instance, this never-ending talk about Regine Velasquez and me having an affair has reached insane proportions. It no longer bothers me as much as it amuses me. Besides, my wife Michelle and I understand each other beyond anybody's understanding."

Daboy & Da Wife

RUDY Fernandez and Lorna Tolentino give show biz marriages a good name. The flawless couple have coped with all the flaws that have flowed their way for 23 years now. "I wouldn't say na *nalagpasan na namin lahat ng* trials. *Hanggang buhay, laging may* good and bad times as a couple. What's important is we never give up on each other," LT says.

For the very first time, they are together in an afternoon drama series "Now and Forever" (Season 6, "Linlang"), which premiers today on GMA 7's *Dramarama sa Hapon*.

The tearjerker depicts the eternal struggle of humans between truth and lies. In the series, Lorna has a May-December affair with Polo Ravales. I teased my *kumare*: "Didn't Daboy get jealous of your romantic scenes with Polo?" She laughed. "We're too old for that!" But their looks and their love remain forever young.

F.Y.I. (For Your Indulgence)

• DIRECTOR Jeff Tan's debut film "White Lady" grossed about P5.8 million on its opening day. The Regal Films' horror flick was rated B by the Cinema Evaluation Board. Ironically, it lends a fresh look to a gory theme. No doubt, there's one lady perched on white clouds who's so proud of Direk Jeff's achievement—his late mom Bella Tan.

• A reader e-mailed me about my recent item on Cindy Kurleto and her BF Daniel Thompson. She claims that the lovers live together in Rockwell's Rizal Tower. I see nothing wrong with "playing house." That usually tames playboys and playgirls even if it just lasts until further notice.

• FPJ's stunning daughter Lovi and Cogie

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3 R.V. RUNAWAY VACATION
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Inspired staging enhance appeal of 'P

IT'S OFFICIAL: THE FILM WORLD'S new box-office champion is "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest." What has made it such a big winner, and how good is it as a film?

In our estimation, the film's popularity is due to that fact that viewers enjoy pirate tales, they love Johnny Depp's wackily idiosyncratic portrayal of "Captain" Jack Sparrow, and the movie has production values and visual effects galore.

Working in inspired combination, these factors have pushed the film all the way to the top in terms of likability and popularity.

But, what about the movie's quality? It's compromised by its excessively thin story line, which can't sustain viewers' interest as it's stretched out to the production's inordinate length.

In addition, Keira Knightley isn't believable when character tries to pass herself off as a man, so she can go on the pirate ship to save her fiance, played by Orlando Bloom.

And director Gore Verbinski further distends his production by stuffing in too many plus points that are fine when taken separately, but feel overwrought when seen as one, big, ungainly lump.

Despite these and other flaws, however, this "Pirates" sequel remains a viewing treat. It has splendor, sass, scope, range, texture, drama, and inspired staging concepts that are brilliantly executed. Some of the best bits:

The very creative characterization of Davy Jones as a denizen of the underwater-underworld with a multi-tentacled squid for a face.

The long fight and chase sequence in which the combatants roll down a hill balancing and teetering on a huge wooden wheel, before finally coming to a stop in the briny deep.

The attack on the pirates' ship by a giant octopus, whose monstrous tentacles are strong enough to pull the ship underwater.

And, most inventive of all, the deftly complicated series of scenes in which

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 LADY IN THE WATER	2 NACHO LIBRE	3 THX PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 1:00, 4:10, 7:20, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 LOVEWRECKED	5 RV: RUNAWAY VACATION	6 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	7 SUPERMAN RETURNS
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 LADY IN THE WATER		2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX LADY IN THE WATER 1:40, 4:05, 6:30, 8:55, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS		2 THX PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST 2:05, 5:10, 8:15, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	3 RV: RUNAWAY VACATION 2:00, 4:15, 6:30, 8:45, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 SUPERMAN RETURNS 1:45, 4:50, 7:55, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 12:45, 3:50, 6:55, 10:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST		2 RV: RUNAWAY VACATION	
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M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST		2 WHITE LADY	
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concepts irates' sequel

tes escape from cages strung hasm; while Sparrow also tries away from pursuing natives, he's "impaled" like a pig on a mboo pole.

particular sequence is devel- creatively that it ends up feel- one of those classic silent-com- es in movies starring the acro- batic likes of Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd.

To sum up: parts of "Dead Man's Chest" can be a tedious view, but the film as a involving and entertaining. question now is, how can the rates" film top this one?!

time blitz

the month ends, ABC-5 is units "prime time blitz" of eye- new shows, led by "Philippine p.m. on Sunday, July 30.

We Dance?" (9:30 p.m. Sun- currently fielding a new set of oed celebrity hoofers—Carmi Roderick Paulate, Asia Agcaoili Mapa. So glad to see that the steering clear of non-dancers, on around.

line" is an in-depth news mag- t has Ed Lingao taking viewers refront of breaking news sto-

s" telecasts independently- l short films by directors like Henares, Jon Red, Roxlee, Pam Miras and RA Rivera.

"Ultimate Guinness World " "Ultimate Pinoy," "Todo Totoo TV," "Letty La Mas Fea," Cara," "Stories of Survival," Shockers" and "Teka Mona."

t Jazz'

bravura numbers from wonder nky Marquez and Bituin Es- s they guest in ballet Philip- ll That Jazz" dance tribute to ic on Aug. 11-13 at the CCP eater. Call 551-1003 or log on allet.com.ph

Dario Fo play

TANGHALANG Ateneo presents "Ang Aksidenteng Kamatayan ng Isang Anarkista," Joseph dela Cruz's Filipino translation of Nobel Prize winner Dario Fo's acclaimed play on July 26-29 and Aug. 1-5. Call 426-6001, local 5121 or 0906-502-6484.

FEEDBACK

Shush, girl!

From "c.s.a." (mirazhsal@yahoo.com):

KRIS Aquino should stop giving unsolicited marital advice to couples in her nightly TV game show. Most, if not all, of those couples have been married far longer than Aquino has ever been, and should perhaps be the ones giving her advice.

In at least two recent episodes that I saw, Aquino lectured the contestants on how the women should remember that final decisions should rest on the men, that wives should respect and follow their husbands' directions.

Aquino said this to a couple who had to decide whether or not to accept less, but certain, money in exchange for a possible windfall. Firstly, it is only a game show, and Aquino should stick to what she does best and is paid for by her station—hosting.

She should not make this game of chance a basis for forming opinions and for preaching.

Secondly, Aquino seems not to have heard of efforts towards joint or shared parenthood, where spouses are encouraged to jointly perform the responsibilities of rearing and taking care of their family, where each spouse is on equal footing with the other in everything—yes, including decision-making.

This is to empower women and liberate them from the traditional image of a "mere housewife."

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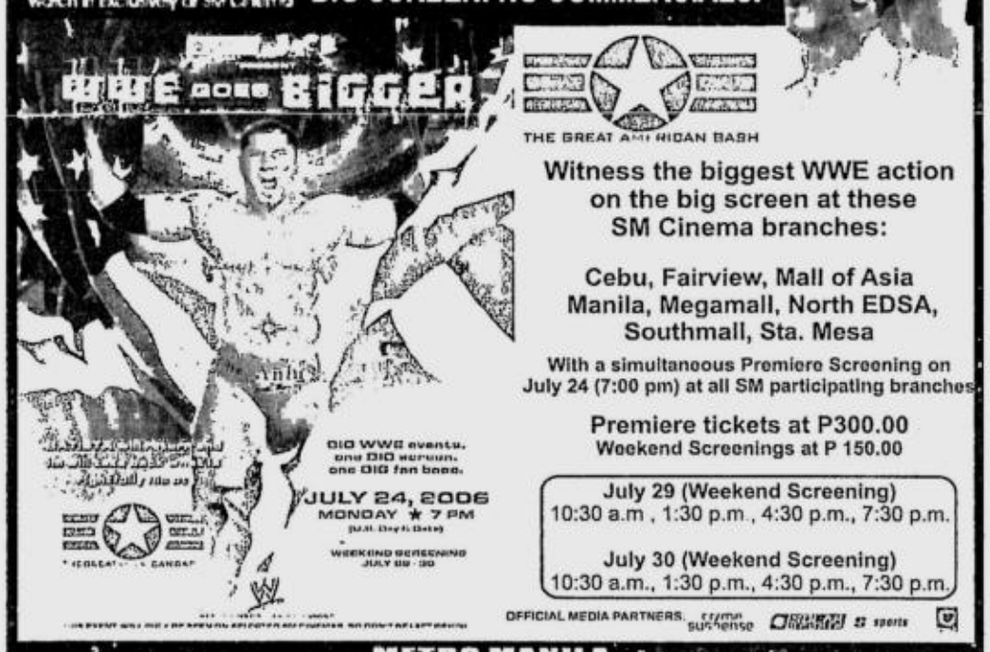

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July 30 (Weekend Screening)
10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 4:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m.

OFFICIAL MEDIA PARTNERS

METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104
SAN MIGUEL Coca-Cola IMAX THEATRE
SUPERMAN RETURNS
11:00 02:00 05:00 08:00 11:00
556-4629

PREMIERE CINEMA
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
DIRECTOR'S CLUB
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
CENTERSTAGE
RESERVED
1 SUPERMAN RETURNS
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 NACHO LIBRE
5 RV
6 WHITE LADY

THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
CINEMA 2
SUPERMAN RETURNS
633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 NACHO LIBRE
3 WHITE LADY
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 I WANNA BE HAPPY
6 RV
7 SUPERMAN RETURNS
8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 WHITE LADY
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 RV
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
5 NACHO LIBRE
6 LADY IN THE WATER
7 LAKE HOUSE
8 THE NUN
9 I WANNA BE HAPPY
10 WHITE LADY
11 LOVEWRECKED
12 FAST AND FURIOUS 3

SM CITY SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS
5 NACHO LIBRE
6 LOVEWRECKED
7 RV
8 WHITE LADY
9 I WANNA BE HAPPY

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 I WANNA BE HAPPY
2 LOVEWRECKED
3 THE NUN
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
5 WHITE LADY
6 NACHO LIBRE
7 LADY IN THE WATER
8 RV
9 SUPERMAN RETURNS
10 SCARY MOVIE 4
11 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
12 BATAS MILITAR

SM CITY BASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 WHITE LADY
2 NACHO LIBRE
3 RV
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 WHITE LADY
6 RV
7 NACHO LIBRE
8 I WANNA BE HAPPY
9 LOVEWRECKED
10 THE NUN

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 NACHO LIBRE
2 RV
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
5 SUPERMAN RETURNS
6 LADY IN THE WATER
7 WHITE LADY
8 LOVEWRECKED
9 THE NUN
10 I WANNA BE HAPPY
11 SCARY MOVIE 4
12 LAKE HOUSE

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 RV
5 NACHO LIBRE
6 WHITE LADY

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 WHITE LADY
4 RV

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 RV
2 WHITE LADY
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 LADY IN THE WATER

EVENT CALENDAR SM SHOWTIME EVENT CALENDAR

LUZON

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 WHITE LADY
2 RV
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 RV
2 WHITE LADY
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 THE NUN
2 I WANNA BE HAPPY
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 SUPERMAN RETURNS
6 WHITE LADY
7 NACHO LIBRE
8 RV

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 WHITE LADY
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 RV

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 SUPERMAN RETURNS
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 WHITE LADY

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 RV
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 I WANNA BE HAPPY
5 WHITE LADY
6 SUPERMAN RETURNS

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 RV
5 I WANNA BE HAPPY
6 WHITE LADY

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 WHITE LADY
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66
1 RV
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 WHITE LADY
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 THE NUN
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
6 RV
7 WHITE LADY
8 SUPERMAN RETURNS

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 RV
2 RESERVED
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 WHITE LADY
5 SUPERMAN RETURN
6 LOVEWRECKED
7 RESERVED
8 THE NUN

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 CHAOS
3 WHITE LADY
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 RV
6 SUPERMAN RETURN

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 WHITE LADY
3 LAKE HOUSE
4 RV

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

CINEMA ACCESS
635-5555
FOR ALL BRANCHES

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA 1-62-0116

1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2 • THX
12:00 3:10 6:20 9:30

2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
12:30 3:40 6.50 10:00

3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

4 LADY IN THE WATER
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10.00

5 WHITE LADY
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

6 NACHO LIBRE
1:20 3:30 5:40 7 50 10:00

7 LAKE HOUSE
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

8 WILD ORCHID 2
12:00 2:30 5.00 7:30 10:00

9 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

10 LOVE WRECKED
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50

ERMITA 7638-7808 to 28

1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
12:30 3:35 6:40 9:50

2 WILD ORCHID 2
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 LADY IN THE WATER
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9.50

4 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

5 SUPERMAN RETURNS
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 9:50

6 NACHO LIBRE
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

7 WHITE LADY
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

METRO EAST 687-1901

1 UNTED 93
1:00 3.00 5:00 7:00 9:00

2 LADY IN THE WATER
1:15 3:50 6:25 9:00

3 NACHO LIBRE
12.50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
11:45 2.50 5:55 9:00

5 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

6 WILD ORCHID 2
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

7 SUPERMAN RETURNS
12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

8 WHITE LADY
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

NOVALICHES 936-3231 / 936-3228-30

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 WHITE LADY
4 NACHO LIBRE
5 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
6 WILD ORCHID 2

CITI SQUARE MALABON 288-2575 PIONEER 687-6378

1 I WANNA BE HAPPY
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 2
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
3 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
4 WILD ORCHID 2

EXCLUSIVE SCREENING
Robinsons Movieworld
GALLERIA•ERMITA•METRO EAST
NOVALICHES
JULY 19 to 25

It had a sentimental storyline about a young girl named Blue (Nina Siemasako) who is forced into prostitution by economic circumstances. She tries to live a double life in and out of the brothel and, in a vaguely Elizabethan twist, ends up providing paid pleasure to her dream man while she is in disguise.

The knowledge Blue gains while in disguise allows her to evaluate her lover's sincerity later on. With the aid of a sympathetic brothel bodyguard Sully, Blue escapes the hold exerted on her by the madam, leaves town, and tries to establish herself as a high school student in the same high school where her dream boy is the school quarterback! They end up courting one another chastely, although he remains unaware that he has already had sex with her. Meanwhile, the jilted madam wants Blue back, and will stop at nothing to get her.

MTRCB Rating: R-18

For SCREENING SCHEDULE, pls. call our CINEMA ACCESS: 635-5555 or visit us: www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 WHITE LADY
3 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS

LIPA (043) 757-3684 (043) 312-5870

1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 WHITE LADY
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 RV RUNAWAY VACATION

DASMARINAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-1332

1 WHITE LADY
2 NACHO LIBRE
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
4 RV RUNAWAY VACATION

ANGELES (045) 892-2448

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 WHITE LADY
4 RV RUNAWAY VACATION

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 WHITE LADY
5 NACHO LIBRE

STARMILLS (045) 876-1924 (045) 981-5270

1 SPL
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 WHITE LADY
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS
5 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
3 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS
5 WHITE LADY
6 THE NUN

ILOILO (033) 338-8070

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 WHITE LADY
3 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
4 LOVE WRECKED
5 SEE NO EVIL

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The best in her league

BLACK Eyed Peas

FROM WHERE WE SIT AS not-so-detached observers, we dare proclaim Vina Morales as the best performer in her league.

She has a powerful, distinctive singing voice and style, and she can dance up a storm! (Don't get us started on her perfectly tight and toned body.) Throw her in with most "batch mates"—she would be what ... in her very early 30s?—maybe in a huge open-air show, and watch them shrink.

Take it from us; we saw her in such a setting last year. The only fellow performers she did not render extraneous were Gary Valenciano, Martin Nievera, Lea Salonga and Sarah Geronimo.

Her last solo concert was "Vina Revealed" at the Folk Arts Theater in 2002.

But she has another one coming, "Vina Morales: Showgirl," Aug. 19 at the Araneta Coliseum, to celebrate her 20th anniversary in the business.

Live Artist Productions promises "scintillating and titillating numbers."

Vina confirms this, but won't give details. "Suffice it to say, it will be a night of surprises."

There are rumors that she will be going topless in at least one number.

Please. She doesn't need to do that.

Vina will be joined by special guests Ogie Alcasid, Jay-R, her sister Shaina Magdayao and Ai Ai de las Alas.

Call 920-2643, 721-2292 or 911-5555.

VINA MORALES

To Pea or not ...

TEN tons of equipment (a million dollars worth of state-of-the-art sounds and lights) a full complement of musicians and dancers, and a lineup of R&B/hip-hop numbers for a two-hour show or longer.

That's what's in store for Filipino fans of the Black-Eyed Peas who are expected to troop to the Big Dome on Thursday for the Manila leg of the group's "Monkey Business Tour." The promoters' (Viva Concerts) pledge: It would be as if one had gone abroad to watch the Peas perform—without having to leave Manila.

The Black Eyed Peas are the Grammy-award winning group behind hits like "Where is the Love," "Let's Get it Started," "Shut up," "Don't Phunk with my Heart," "Don't Lie," "Bebot," and "My Humps." Ther are set to sing all these hits, plus songs from the chart-topping "Monkey Business" album.

Tickets are from P500 (general admission) to P5,000 (patron).

The Peas—William Adams (will.i.am), Taboo (Jaime Gomez), Fergie (Stacy Ferguson) and Fil-American Allen Pineda Lindo, more popularly known as Apl.de.ap—are flying in from Taiwan tomorrow with an entourage of about 40, which includes dancers and technical crew. Viva Concerts reportedly spent P30 million to mount this production.

Outside of the concert, the Peas have scheduled extensive promo activities that will give them plenty of opportunities to touch base with their fans here.

Says Viva Concerts' Vincent del Rosario: "It's going to be a wall-to-wall excitement the whole time they're in Manila."

Call 911-5555.

RUDY Fernandez and Lorna Tolentino

How 'debt'

From page A2-1

Domingo are often spotted together in show biz and non-show biz events.

"We're just hanging out," says Lovi. So for now things are hanging between them? Soon enough, will they be hung up on each other?

Jobs TV Season 2

SCRIBBLEWORKS Productions brings you "Jobs TV," (10 a.m., Saturdays on Studio 23), the pioneering program that addresses people's needs in starting and developing careers. On its second season, the show gives a rundown on getting a job, from choosing an industry and making a résumé to acing interviews and even getting that promotion. Join host Ria Tanjuatco Trillo in the yuppie world, with the segment Corporate Ladder, featuring IBM Daksh and its training officers providing information on their job openings and recruitment process.

By Special Request

CATCH "Erik Santos... By Special Request" at Zirkoh-Timog on Friday at 9 p.m. Joining him are Frenchy Dy, Rhythm Band and his lady love Ruffa Mae Quinto. For tickets, call (0906) 430-1069, 374-8270.

Readers' Corner

DEAR Dolly,

I read your column on John Estrada last week. I was in Capones when John and Heart bumped into each other there. My friends and I think that Heart was the one flirting with John. She was wearing a sleeveless top and short mini skirt.

As my BF put it, she didn't act like she had a BF. We believe John because we saw that he was keeping his distance while Heart was making her moves. We even overheard him telling Heart to go home as he gave her a glass of water because it seemed like she had had a few too many.

Name withheld upon request

For feedback, e-mail wateringholeshangri-la@yahoo.com.

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
4 NACHO LIBRE
PREMIERE
R. V. RUNAWAY VACATION

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 WHITE LADY
4 R. V.

stармall
EDSA cor. SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7265150
3 R. V.
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
5 WHITE LADY

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433934
1 WHITE LADY
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
4 LADY IN THE WATER

THEATRES
1 SUPERMAN RETURNS
2 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS -3
3 WHITE LADY

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
2 WHITE LADY
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 R.V. RUNAWAY VACATION
6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
7 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
8 I WANNA BE HAPPY
9 NACHO LIBRE
10 WHITE LADY

Blue Wave
Sunvalley Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sta. Nino, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 WHITE LADY
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
4 RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
3 WHITE LADY
4 NACHO LIBRE
5 SUPERMAN RETURNS

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
2 WHITE LADY
3 I WANNA BE HAPPY
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 WHITE LADY
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 I WHITE LADY
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 R. V.
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 SUPERMAN RETURNS
2 WHITE LADY

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 NACHO LIBRE
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 RUNAWAY VACATION

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium
Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 R. V. RUNAWAY VACATION
2 WHITE LADY
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall (Binan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 WHITE LADY
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 R. V. RUNAWAY VACATION

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix (Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 WHITE LADY
2 I WANNA BE HAPPY
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS

Cinema 2000 Metrotown (Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 I WANNA BE HAPPY
2 WHITE LADY
3 SEE NO EVIL
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Plandel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
2 R. V. RUNAWAY VACATION
3 WHITE LADY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 WHITE LADY
2 I WANNA BE HAPPY

Lianas Cinema (Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 BATAS MILITAR
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
2 ROSARIO 18
3 BATAS MILITAR
4 SABIK SAYO

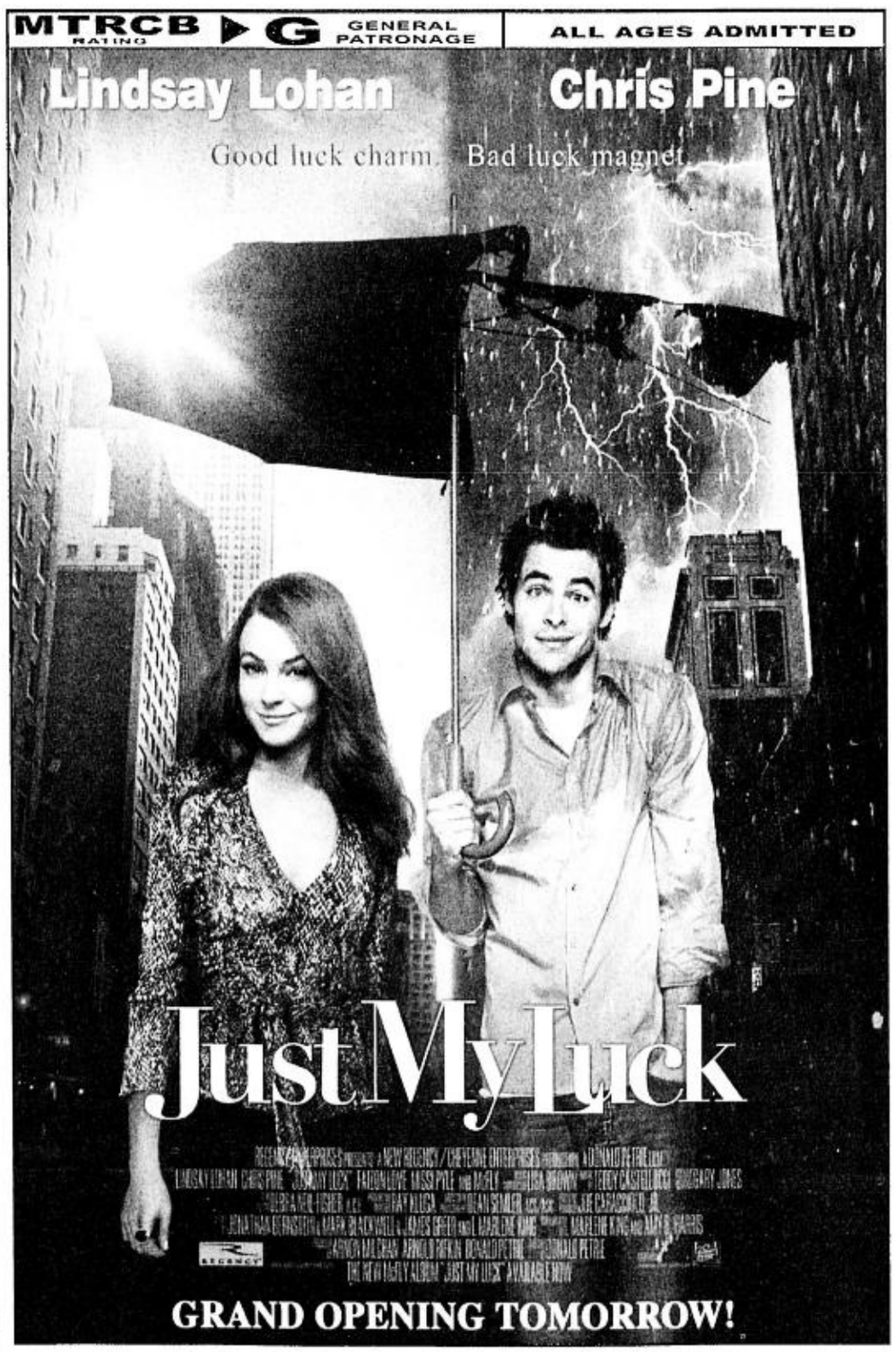
Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 SENSES
2 BOLD STAR
3 WHITE LADY
4 BATAS MILITAR
5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 R. V. RUNAWAY VACATION
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
3 WHITE LADY
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS

Berma Cinema (Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 I WANNA BE HAPPY
2 PEEP SHOW

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

ARANETA CENTER
Gateway MALL FarmersPlaza
THE ONLY CINEPLEX IN THE COUNTRY
Gateway CINEPLEX 10
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
WHITE LADY 12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40
SUPERMAN RETURNS 12:30 / 3:30 / 6:30 / 9:30
NACHO LIBRE 1:05 / 3:15 / 5:25 / 7:35 / 9:45
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 1:00 / 4:00 / 7:00 / 10:00
LADY IN THE WATER 12:20 / 2:10 / 2:45 / 4:35 5:10 / 7:00 / 7:35 / 9:25 / 10:00
RUNAWAY VACATION 1:10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 12:00 / 3:00 / 6:00 / 9:00
MALL 5
RUNAWAY VACATION 12:05 / 2:15 / 4:20 / 6:35 / 8:45
LADY IN THE WATER 1:15 / 3:40 / 6:05 / 8:30
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 12:00 / 3:00 / 6:00 / 9:00
WHITE LADY 12:10 R4 / 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30
NACHO LIBRE 12:00 / 2:10 / 4:20 / 6:30 / 8:40
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS
For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph
ARANETA COLISEUM
BLACK EYED PEAS - MONKEY BUSINESS TOUR! July 27, Thursday - 8:00 pm
THE PUSSYCAT DOLLS LIVE IN MANILA! July 28, Friday - 8:00 pm



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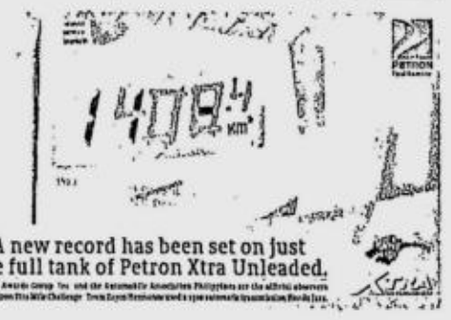

A new record has been set on just one full tank of Petron Xtra Unleaded.

Gov't beats tax forecast, reports higher take

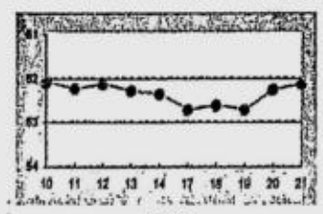
Jan-May VAT collection of ₱29.7B exceeds target by 24%, says DOF

IN THIS ISSUE

SMIC eyes P6-B BPO complex /B2
Customs seen hitting P15.5-B collection target for July /B3
Gov't moves to ensure competition in power /B6

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



JULY
PESO-DOLLAR RATE
₱52.165 = $1
As of 5 p.m., July 21, 2006

STOCK MARKET

Stormy weather

THE COUNTRY'S FINANCIAL MARKETS were closed yesterday due to bad weather, the Philippine stock exchange announced. Trading is expected to resume today.

Share prices last closed at 0.27 percent lower. The composite index lost 6.15 points at 2,241.25 after trading between 2,231.22 and 2,247.40. Volume was 6.6 billion shares worth P951.27 million.

The broader all-shares index retreated 1.23 points to 1,396.94. Losers led gainers 43 to 39, with 56 stocks unchanged. *AFP*

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT YESTERDAY REPORTED that it collected P29.7 billion in additional taxes from January to May, exceeding its revenue target for the period, on account of the VAT Reform Law.

The actual VAT collection in the first five months of the year was 24 percent higher than the P23.9-billion revenue target set for the period.

"The government is now harvesting the benefits of the implementation of RA 9337 (the VAT law), with the flow of additional revenue [to be] allocated for important projects," Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said in a statement.

Under the VAT law, 30 percent of the additional taxes to be collected this year would be used to help fund infrastructure projects and improve the delivery of basic services like education. The remaining 70 percent would be used to reduce the government's budget deficit.

The Department of Finance reported that of the P29.7-billion take, the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) collected P8.7 billion, while the Bureau of Customs (BOC) accounted for the larger share of P21 billion.

The BIR's P8.7-billion VAT collection was about twice its P4.3-billion target, while the BOC's VAT collection of P21 billion was 7-percent higher than its P19.6-billion goal.

Finance Undersecretary Gil Beltran said the BIR was able to beat its VAT collection target in the first five months because of the decline in claims of input value-added tax credits and higher-than-expected collection of additional revenues from the imposition of non-VAT provisions of RA 9337.

But he also said the BIR's VAT collec-

GOV'T/ B3

RP in line for huge dev't policy loan from World Bank

By Doris C. Dumlao

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1999, THE Philippines is in line for a large budgetary support facility from the World Bank known as the development policy loan (DPL), which serves like a seal of good housekeeping.

The World Bank extends the DPL to countries with sound macroeconomic management. On its part, the Philippine government hopes to raise at least $400 million from this official development assistance.

The World Bank is expected to extend the support facility within the next 12 months.

"We haven't finalized the amount yet," WB country director Joachim von Amsberg said in an interview. "It's a lump sum and its tied to four specific reforms. So, we're saying this is a loan in support of the reforms government has taken by that time, including fiscal reforms, but it could likewise include others because we're not only looking at aggregate fiscal reform but quality of expenditures, civil service reform and corruption control."

He said the DPL would have quantitative and qualitative triggers, mostly related to the government's fiscal resolve.

"Because of the fiscal turnaround, this is the first time we're considering it now," von Amsberg said.

He cited a number of quantitative triggers for the DPL under the WB's country assistance strategy.

"One is an adjustment of 2.5 to 3 percent in the consolidated public sector deficit, that has already happened; significant adjustment in tax revenues, which is about to happen; and, if the government meets its targets for increasing revenue collection by 1.4 percent of GDP (gross domestic product) this year, the quantitative triggers would have been met," he explained.

On the other hand, the qualitative content would include actual reforms passed, such as the expanded value added tax (VAT) law, the administrative reforms in the Bureau of Internal Revenue, an improvement in the framework for public expenditures, and the reconciliation of budget exe-

RP/ B2

SM unit eyes P6-B BPO complex

Plan hinges on accelerated growth of the economy

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SM INVESTMENTS CORP., THE FLAGSHIP firm of mall tycoon Henry Sy, is considering the establishment of a P6-billion business process and outsourcing complex at the Mall of Asia to meet growing demand for space from BPO companies.

INQUIRER sources said SMIC was looking at putting up four BPO buildings to constitute the complex but this would be pursued only if economic growth would accelerate.

SMIC is currently constructing a P1.5-billion-BPO building at the Mall of Asia, dubbed OneEcomCenter, for completion by July next year. If plans pushed through, three other buildings of this kind would be put up by the company.

A market study conducted by property consultant Leechiu & Associates showed that potential tenants had already started scouting for possible sites for operations that were scheduled to start next year.

"BPO companies are looking for office space with technologically advanced facilities to serve their needs. We will provide that type of space with a building that has open floor plans, advanced telecom facilities and 24/7 power supply," said SMIC vice chair Henry Sy Jr., who is also managing director of SMIC's property group.

The 105,857-square meter OneEcomCenter sits on a 1.17-hectare lot inside the SM Central Business Park at the Mall of Asia.

A total of 71,934 square meters will be available for lease. Seven floors will be allotted for office space, and the ground floor for commercial use. The average floor plate will measure 9,000 square meters.

Tenants of OneEcomCenter will also enjoy tax incentives as the BPO building has been registered the Philippine Export Zone Authority (Peza).

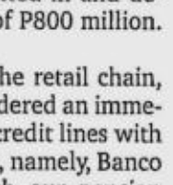
OneEcomCenter is connected via its second level pedestrian bridgeway to the 386,000-square meter Mall of Asia, the country's largest shopping mall.

The Mall of Asia, the centerpiece of the SM Central Business Park, houses the first Philippine call center of the world's largest computer maker, Dell Inc. Not too far away is another call center, Teletech, which is housed in Building F of the SM Corporate Offices.

With its huge floor plate, OneEcomCenter will be able to accommodate not just BPOs but also other types of office tenants. It will provide cutting-edge facilities to meet the growing needs of technology-based companies engaged in software development and BPO's such as contact centers, animation, and medical transcription.

State of the ration

BREAKTIME



Conrado R. Banal III

DOWN HERE IN MY BARANGAY, WE STRAIN our eyes looking for signs of the good job that this cute administration of Gloriaetta supposedly did for the economy.

According to people who make a lot of money by imagining some great deeds of Gloriaetta, this cute administration did well particularly in fiscal management. For one, Gloriaetta's boys brought down the budget deficit. To the A-kissers, of course, it does not matter how they did it.

We all know that the budget deficit went down mainly because of new taxation—such as the expanded VAT. We also know that the additional revenue from the VAT came mainly from us. Make no mistake: We, the people, paid for it all!

Every centavo of additional tax on us, however, should only weaken further our already anaemic spending power. Thanks to the high price of oil!

The additional taxes become more painful to us, because today we spend more on fuel, electricity, and everything that has anything to do with oil.

And it's all because this cute administration wanted us to make sacrifices for the country. They said we just have to pay more taxes. Fine! Only, it's a one-way sacrifice street. What are they doing about the government's bad spending habits?

It's not just about the wasted tax money on the bloated bureaucracy, although the number of deadwood in the government is increasing by the minute.

If it is not too much to ask of Gloriaetta, we are only interested in knowing what this cute administration is doing about graft and corruption.

You see, everyday we hear and read about multimillion-peso deals that which almost always involve the Palace. Some people are making a lot of money at our expense. It's as if they ration kickbacks among themselves.

So now the Palace boys , plus the A-kissers in Congress and business organizations, are saying that, thanks to this cute administration, our lives should be getting better.

According to their newspaper ads, we are already among the highest paid workers in Asia. That's why we do not need any pay increase.

They forget to say that utilities, rent, food, education and transport are costing us much more nowadays. We may have one of the highest wages in Asia, sure, but nobody ever dares to say that the cost of living in this country beats all of the other countries combined.

We do not even eat well!

And they tell us that we are doing better? Don't bother, boss! We know what we know down here.

***

Tessie Sy, the heir apparent of SM group's Henry Sy, is proving to be the deal breaker in the family. At least it's the reputation she is starting to build in the business community.

Not so long ago, the SM group was deep in negotiations to acquire a chain of retail stores carrying imported goods. On top of the acquisition talks on the side of the SM group was one of the four younger brothers of Tessie Sy.

Initially, from what we heard, the SM group was offered P1.4 billion for the retail stores chain. After tough bargaining, the SM group was able to bring it down to P1.2 billion.

But just when both parties were ready to sign the papers, Tessie Sy butted in and demanded a much lower price of P800 million. The deal was cancelled.

Playing hard ball against the retail chain, somebody in the SM group ordered an immediate cut of the retail chain's credit lines with banks controlled by the group, namely, Banco de Oro and EPCIB, in which our pension funds, the GSIS and the SSS, poured almost P20 billion.

No wonder, today, the stores of the retail chain hardly have anything to sell anymore. At least, according to talk in Binondo, the SM group was able to eliminate one competition by using the banks it controls.

***

Metrobank, the biggest bank in the country today, is starting to flex its financial muscle. Metrobank chair Antonio Abacan says the bank will pursue, and rather aggressively, more business with big corporate clients.

As you know, the big boys in business do business with several banks—at least five banks. Reason: domestic banks were too small for the needs of the 'biggies.'

As a strategy to capture a bigger market share among the top corporations, Metrobank is using its ... well, bigness.

At present, the so-called "single borrower's limit" of Metrobank is close to P14 billion. Thus, it can singly accommodate any big company here.

In other words, Metrobank will work on big clients to do away with their second, third or fourth bank. As big as it is, Metrobank can provide all their credit needs. To the big boys, it will mean lower bank transaction costs.

How come Metrobank is getting more aggressive? It is because of the new president, Arthur Ty, the son of George Ty.

According to Abacan, it's just because Metrobank is now ready to be aggressive. It has already cleaned up its non-performing loans, which used to be 16 percent of total loans. It is now down to 3 percent.

That's the game in banking: Banks make money by giving out loans. You know—credit lines!

EPCIB, on the other hand, now controlled by the SM group, is cutting credit lines such as those of the retail chain. How will it make money?

Invitation for

Expression of Interest

Private Sector Participation for
Power Generation in the
Island of Masbate
(NPC – SPUG)

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines, with the support of its appointed transaction advisor, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), is inviting private sector participation through long-term concession agreements, in electricity generation in the off-grid areas of the Philippines. Masbate is the fourth off-grid area to conduct a competitive selection process to be held in September, 2006.

Interested parties are requested to submit a formal Expression of Interest, including a brief profile of their Company/Group, to be received at the IFC address below along with a registration fee of Php5,000 made payable to the National Power Corporation. Once registered, they will be given an information memorandum and other documents relating to the program's investment opportunity. Registration starts on July 25, 2006 to August 15, 2006.

Sanjay Grewal
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International Finance Corporation (IFC)
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IFC International Finance Corporation

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

NAME	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	1,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	31.5	31.5	31	31.5	401,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	51	52	51	51.5	356,300
China Banking Corp.	845	845	845	845	10
Citystate Savings Bank	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	400
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	260,000
Equitable PCI Bank, Inc.	75	77.5	75	77.5	32,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	35.5	36	35	36	151,600
Philippine National Bank	34.5	34.5	34	34	10,200
Phil. Savings Bank	38.5	38.5	38.5	38.5	400
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	18	18	18	18	14,200
Union Bank of the Phil.	44	44	44	44	2,000
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	1.78	1.8	1.76	1.76	457,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	30	30.5	29	30.5	11,400
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	214	214	214	214	10
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1980	1980	1980	1980	240
Ivantage Corp.	1.26	1.28	1.26	1.28	615,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	43.5	43.5	43.5	43.5	101,100
First Phil Hldgs Corp	44.5	44.5	44.5	44.5	1,400
Manila Electric Co. A	15	15	14.75	15	80,400
Manila Electric Co. B	24	24	24	24	404,400
Manila Water Co. Inc.	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	6,596,000
Petron Corp.	4	4.05	4	4	1,750,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.22	0.27	0.22	0.27	1,830,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	120,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	20,000
CADP Group Corp.	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.4	42,000
Cen Azucar de Tarlac	3	3	3	3	2,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23	23.25	23	23	82,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	31.5	32	31	32	120,100
Pancake House Inc.	4.65	4.65	4.65	4.65	40,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.15	3.3	3.15	3.2	1,869,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65.5	66	65.5	66	37,200
San Miguel Corp. B	71	71.5	71	71.5	52,500
Universal Robina Corp.	19	19	18.75	19	407,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.19	0.2	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	1,610,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.5	1.52	1.5	1.52	717,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.55	4.55	4.55	4.55	227,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	20,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIAL					
Global Equities Inc.	0.09	0.11	0.09	0.1	110,500,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	100,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	8,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.007	0.008	0.007	0.0075	177,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.008	28,000,000
Ayala Corp.	400	402.5	397.5	400	116,610
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	1,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.8	1.82	1.8	1.82	795,000
APC Group, Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	500,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	10,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	500,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	3,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	110,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	38,700
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	200,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4.05	4.1	4.05	4.1	2,684,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.9	2.95	2.9	2.9	848,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	34,000
Pacifica	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	5,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.16	0.185	0.16	0.18	5,030,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	50,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.115	0.12	0.115	0.12	7,430,000
SM Investments Corp.	221	222	220	221	60,350
South China Resources Inc	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	190,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.05	0.0575	0.05	0.055	21,400,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	100,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.25	12.5	1,214,800
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	1,000,000
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.04	2,699,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.9	20,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	7,990,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.16	2.22	2.16	2.18	589,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.38	1.48	1.34	1.34	16,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.18	0.225	0.18	0.22	885,950,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.45	5,930,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	30,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	3,783,000
Interport Res.	0.006	0.007	0.006	0.0065	244,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	40,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.77	50,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.205	710,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.4	1.42	1.4	1.42	8,283,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.205	0.21	0.205	0.205	3,150,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	10.75	10.75	10.5	10.75	276,400
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	2,410,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.7	7.8	7.7	7.8	1,065,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	140,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	16	16	16	16	2,300
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	175,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.2	1.2	1.18	1.18	719,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	935	955	935	955	111,690
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.5	788,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1895	1920	1885	1885	127,990
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.17	0.175	0.17	0.175	440,000
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	1,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	1,000,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	135,000
Philweb Corp.	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.032	34,400,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	424,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	14	14	14	14	32,500
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	70,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.36	1.42	1.34	1.38	17,274,000
Manila Jockey Club	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	121,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.195	0.2	0.19	0.19	2,140,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	33,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	10,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.4	8.4	8.3	8.3	2,000
iPeople Inc	3	3.05	3	3	21,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.12	2.14	2.12	2.12	111,000
Paxys Inc.	11	11.25	11	11.25	388,000
Prime Gaming Phils. Inc.	35	35	35	35	90,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	3.8	3.9	3.65	3.75	2,632,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	3.75	3.9	3.65	3.7	1,412,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	234,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.6	264,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	19,280,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	20,670,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	24,900,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	60,100,000
Omico Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.01	.0114	551,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	4	4	3.9	3.95	3,214,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4	4	3.9	4	2,115,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26.5	27	26.5	27	6,400
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	300,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	80,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	19,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	2,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.22	1.24	1.22	1.24	236,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.24	1.26	1.22	1.22	519,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	16.25	16.5	16.25	16.25	190,900
PREFERRED					
Ayala Corp. Pref. B	103	105	103	103	16,300
Pldt (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
Pldt (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
Pldt (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
Pldt (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
Pldt 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	600
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	70,000

CURRENCIES

July 21, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.791202	1.000000	52.3830
Japan	Yen	0.006770	0.008556	0.4482
United Kingdom	Pound	1.462537	1.848500	96.8300
Hongkong	Dollar	0.101756	0.128609	6.7369
Switzerland	Franc	0.636270	0.804182	42.1255
Canada	Dollar	0.698509	0.882846	46.2461
Singapore	Dollar	0.498835	0.630477	33.0263
Australia	Dollar	0.594576	0.751484	39.3650
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.098846	2.652731	138.9580
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.210970	0.266645	13.9677
Brunei	Dollar	0.497267	0.628496	32.9225
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000109	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020838	0.026337	1.3796
UAE	Dirham	0.215416	0.272264	14.2620
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.263900	66.2069
Argentina	Peso	0.256883	0.324675	17.0075
Brazil	Real	0.362023	0.457561	23.9684
Denmark	Kroner	0.134036	0.169408	8.8741
India	Rupee	0.016949	0.021422	1.1221
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.215117	0.271887	14.2423
Mexico	New Peso	0.072721	0.091912	4.8146
New Zealand	Dollar	0.492930	0.623014	32.6353
South Africa	Rand	0.114088	0.144196	7.5534
Korea	Won	0.000832	0.001051	0.0551
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024191	0.030575	1.6016

RP in line for huge dev't ...

From page B1

cution and budget formulation.

For the next three years, the WB has set aside $1.8 billion for its country assistance strategy for the Philippines. It is confident that, this time around, the budget will be maximized.

"We're now in a situation where we could commit how much we have on the table, and this could be a substantial financing," he said.

Also, the bank has taken a special interest in reducing corruption in the Philippines.

"We hope to play a part to improve the quality of public expenditure," von Amsberg said. "My sense is that the budget discipline (in the Philippines) has become so well-entrenched ... the country now has the opportunity to finally overcome the slump seen since the Asian financial crisis."

DaimlerChrysler expands RP presence

By Ronnel W. Domingo

AUTOMOTIVE GIANT DAIMLERCHRYSLER yesterday launched its second dealership in the country amid growing vehicle sales and in line with a global thrust to introduce a line up of new models this year.

Peter Mackenzie, head of the firm's operation in Southeast Asia, said in an interview that the new facility along Don Chino Roces Avenue Extension in Makati City was put up a year ahead of schedule.

"When we started our partnership with CATS Motors Inc.—our sole authorized distributor in the Philippines, we agreed that we should have four dealerships within five years," Mackenzie said.

DaimlerChrysler and CATS signed a partnership agreement in December 2004 and opened the first dealership business along Edsa in Greenhills, San Juan in April 2005.

The Singapore-based official said local sales volume was better than expected.

The partners are selling sedans, mini-vans and sports utility vehicles under the Chrysler, Dodge and Jeep brands.

The Chrysler Makati showroom and service center has larger display space and service bays , including those for heavy repair, bodywork and paintwork.

Robert P. Shaw, CATS assistant vice president, said the partners expected to see sales growing by 40 percent by yearend.

Shaw said the growth projection for 2007 was also revised to about 40 percent higher than the original target for that year.

He said the firms were now in preliminary talks for a third dealership that could open next year. "The third would be outside Metro Manila, probably in Cebu," Shaw said.

The firm's bestseller in the local market is the Chrysler 300 C sedan, which is the Chrysler group's flagship model worldwide.

The Chrysler Town and Country minivan, which is more popular globally, also sells strongly here. Other models already available in the country are the Dodge Durango mid-size SUV, Jeep Commander SUV, and the Chrysler Pacifica sport tourer "which offers the best features of an SUV, minivan and car all rolled into one."

Customs seen hitting ₱15.5-B collection target for July

Boosting efforts to bring down budget gap to ₱125B

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS SAID it was likely to meet its P15.5-billion collection goal for July.

This will further boost the national government's chances of attaining a lower-than-programmed budget deficit this year.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales said the BOC was already near its target with one more week to go before July ends.

He did not give specific figures but said the BOC was scheduled to collect this week from Petron Corp., alone, some P800 million in duties, excise tax and value added tax. This, he said, would be enough for the BOC to meet, if not surpass, the P15.5-billion collection goal for the month.

Morales said his office's internal target was P200 billion, as set by the Department of Finance. It's official target for this year is P197 billion.

The BOC's revenue target is aimed at helping the government bring down the budget gap to only P125 billion this year, or lower than last year's P146.8 billion. With a relatively healthy revenue collection and the reenactment of the 2005 budget, which forced the executive branch to restrain spending, fiscal authorities expect the budget deficit to fall way below the P125-billion programmed for the year.

For the first six months of the year, the BOC generated P94.8 billion worth of revenue, higher by 6 percent than the P89.7-billion target set for the period.

Morales said the BOC had instituted measures to ensure the meeting of its collection target for the year especially with the implementation this year of the Lateral Attrition Law. The law provided a mechanism for the granting of penalty or reward to revenue personnel depending on their collection performance.

The Customs chief ordered a major reshuffle of heads of various customs ports to boost the agency's collections.

"If you are a nonperforming asset, you have to be replaced by someone who could collect," Morales said.

In the meantime, the BOC announced the following new appointments: Adelina Molina to head the Manila International Container Port; Carlos So, Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia); Ricardo Belmonte, Port of Cebu; Grace Caringal, Port of Batangas; Ma. Lourdes Mangaoang, Port of Ilo-Ilo; Dennis Azarraga, North Harbor, and Marietta Zamoranos, Port of Subic.

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Smart, Piltel sign up 1.57M new subscribers

By Riza T. Olchondra

PHILIPPINE LONG DISTANCE CO. HAS signed up 1.57 million new cellular phone subscribers in the second quarter of the year, bringing the phone giant's mobile phone subscriber base to 22.47 million as of June.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, PLDT said its subscriber base level as of June was up 7.5 percent from the end-March base of 20.9 million.

In the first quarter, PLDT's mobile phone units, Smart Communications Inc. and Pilipino Telephone Corp. (Piltel), signed up 2.06 million subscribers.

Its widening subscriber base in the cellular phone business alone boosts expectations that PLDT will report on Aug. 8 a second quarter income that is much higher than the P8 billion it recorded in the second quarter of 2005 and the P8.6 billion reported in the first quarter of 2006.

PLDT is entering a venture that will offer a direct-to-home (DTH) satellite pay television service in the country. This venture will be undertaken in partnership with EchoStar Communications Corp., a DTH satellite TV operator in the US, and GV Broadcasting Systems Inc., which has a nationwide license to offer satellite TV services.

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GNPower acquires first retail electricity supplier's license

By Abigail L. Ho

POWER GENERATOR GNPOWER RECENTLY received the first ever retail electricity supplier (RES) license granted by the Energy Regulatory Commission, allowing it to secure supply contracts with end-users upon implementation of retail competition and open access.

ERC chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. said that the issuance of the first RES license would spur competition in the power sector—something the authors of RA 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001, are actively promoting.

"This is another milestone in the emerging restructured electric power industry," Albano said.

RES are entities that can sell, broker, market or aggregate electricity to end-users in the "contestable market" once retail competition and open access takes effect, according to the amended RES license guidelines signed on Feb. 1.

The "contestable market" refers to electricity end-users who are given the right to choose their own power suppliers, instead of being part of the captive market that distribution utilities serve under their franchises.

For a person or organization to qualify as a RES, financial and technical capabilities must be proven.

On the financial aspect, a license applicant should have one of the following to prove its capability to undertake the business: An investment-grade credit rating by a reputable credit bureau; unused cash resources equivalent to expected monthly billings of at least P5 million; or a proof of credit-worthiness as confirmed through certifications from firms that have extended credit terms to the applicant, including generation firms and distribution utilities.

On the technical side, an applicant must be able to operate and manage an electricity supply business, which also involves proper understanding of the ERC's rules, codes and guidelines, and the applications of such to its business.

The ERC said GNPower had sufficiently complied with all the requirements under the RES license guidelines.

GNPower is a limited partnership formed by Power Partners Ltd. Co. and PMR Holding Corp. as general and limited partners, respectively. It has a 600-megawatt coal-fired power plant currently being developed near Mariveles, Bataan.

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Ateneo holds business forum

THE ATENEO GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS (AGSB) is hosting a by-invitation only business leadership forum titled "Take A Chance on Ourselves, Invest in the Philippines" to be held on Thursday, July 27, 2006 from 3 to 6 p.m. at the Ateneo Professional Schools (APS) Auditorium in Rockwell Center.

The event will be shown to AGSB's off-campus sites in Cebu, Sta. Rosa, and Subic via web conferencing facility and will be covered live in a webcast. The webcast may be viewed on mms://stream.mozcom.com/ateneo. Over 800 senior executives from the business sector, faculty and students are expected to attend.

Serving as a kick-off event for the graduate school's 40th anniversary, the business forum features Finance Secretary Margarito B. Teves, PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan and Gawad Kalinga executive director Antonio P. Meloto. AGSB Dean Alfredo R.A. Bengzon will commence the event.

The Business Leadership Forum provides the stage for the speakers, through presentation of their own experiences, to mount a call to action and provide the leadership to galvanize all sectors toward building the nation.

Teves, former representative of the third district of Negros Oriental, was responsible for a number of economic reform laws. Aside from his position in PLDT, Pangilinan also serves as chair of Metro Pacific Corp., Landco Pacific Corp., Pilipino Telephone Corp. and Smart Communications.

Gov't beats tax forecast...

From page B1

tion could have been higher if not for the decline in domestic oil production.

On the other hand, Beltran said, the BOC enjoyed higher-than-programmed VAT collections due to an increase in the volume of oil imports.

While the BIR imposes VAT on domestic goods and services, the BOC charges the tax on imported goods.

The DOF said gross VAT collections in the first five months stood at P37.5 billion, but the government collected a net amount of only P29.7 billion because of the foregone revenues resulting from the various measures implemented to mitigate the impact of the VAT law on consumer's purchasing power.

The VAT law basically expanded the coverage of the value-added tax to include oil, electricity and medical and legal services among others. It also raised the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent to generate additional revenue for the government.

The law also contains a non-VAT related provision—the increase of the corporate income tax rate from 32 to 35 percent.

But the law also contained provisions that were meant to ease the impact of higher taxes. The mitigating measures include the removal of the excise tax on petroleum, the repeal of the franchise tax previously imposed on power distribution, and the withdrawal of common carriers tax on domestic and international transport.

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Ismaela Mabalay-Benavides

August 13, 1908 - July 23, 2006
General Tinio (Papaya) - Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija

Peacefully joined our Creator on July 23 2006 at the age of 97.

Her dearest sister, **Enriqueta M. Cayañga**, sister-in-law **Narcisa M. Mabalay**, nephews and nieces, **Pining, Naty, Mely, Tet, Nilo, Edna, Lulu, Boy, Chinggay, Andy, August,** and **Baby** nephews and nieces-in-law, other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at her residence in Poblacion, Gen. Tinio, Nueva Ecija.

Interment will be on Wednesday, July 26, 2006 at the Sagrada Familia Memorial Park in Cabanatuan City, after the 9:00 AM mass at the Sto. Cristo Church in Gen. Tinio.

Our Dearly Beloved

Dr. Vicente Pacheco Fumar, Sr.

(August 9, 1932 – July 22, 2006)

Peacefully joined our Creator on July 22, 2006 at the age of 83.

His bereaved wife **Dr. Violeta Arevalo-Fumar**; children **Vicente Jr.** (†) and **Cena Altarejos, Dr. Virgilio** and **Dr. Marilie Mercado, Dr. Vivienne** and **Robert Yamat**; grandchildren **Vanessa** and **Ryan Gonzales, Viktor, Natasha Victoria**; siblings **Sergio** (†), **Panching**; sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, aunts, uncles, cousins, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Thursday, July 27, 2006 at Himlayang Pilipino, Quezon City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Our Lady of Consolation Parish Church, Mira Nila, Tierra Pura Homes, Quezon City.

In Loving Memory of
The 1st Death Anniversary of

(Ret. INP Lt. Col.)

Atty. Leandro C. Valenzuela, CPA

Who passed on to Eternal Life on July 25, 2005

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass shall be offered at the following churches:

1. **Our Lady of Loreto**, *Sampaloc* ..... 6:00 a.m.
2. **Sto. Domingo Church**, *Quezon City* ..... 6:30 a.m.
   6:00 p.m.
3. **San Roque Parish**, *Sampaloc* ..... 6:30 a.m.
   6:30 p.m.
4. **St. Anthony's Shrine** ..... 7:00 a.m.
   6:00 p.m.
5. **St. Joseph the Worker Parish**, *Calamba* ..... 5:30 a.m.

~ o ~

"Papa Andring"

He was a man of very unique character. A man who fully and consistently lived a life of austere simplicity, morality and integrity. A man who stood and lived by his principles... He influenced or touched the lives of his wife, children, grandchildren, relatives, workers, and others, in ways distinctively his... and his alone. A man we are profoundly grateful, immensely fortunate, and tremendously proud to have as our father.

Papa... You might not had known this but You have shaped our lives more than You could ever have imagined. We are who we are because of You... We love You more than You ever thought and we miss your physical presence in this simple place we call our home... We still yearn for your peculiar daily routine we had all been so accustomed to that not a single day passes that we do not think or talk about You (which often brings us to feats of laughter and eventually... to sobs and tears).

*Papa... You very often said You were afraid to leave this world because You worried for us, your children... Now that You are up there looking down upon us... Kindly wear a smile on your face and congratulate Yourself and mommy for both of You have done a very good job in raising us. We will continue to journey and struggle through life... united as a family, loving and caring for each other... while continuously guided by your values and principles and by **GOD**...*

In Loving Memory
on the
11TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY
of

Estela M. Peñaflorida

who passed away on 26 July 1995.

Masses will be offered Wednesday, 26 July 2006 at the following:

- **Sanctuario de San Antonio,** ..... 12:15 NN
  Forbes Park
- **Sanctuario de San Jose,** ..... 7:15 AM
  Greenhills
- **St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori,** ..... 6:00 PM
  Magallanes
- **Our Lady of Beautiful Love,** ..... 6:00 PM
  Merville
- **Parish of the Holy Sacrifice,** ..... 6:00 PM
  U.P.
- **St. Joseph's Church,** ..... 5:30 AM
  Pototan, Iloilo
- **St. Clement's Church,** ..... 5:30 PM
  La Paz, Iloilo

The family requests relatives, friends and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Dr. Ambrosio M. Reyes

Pediatrician/Hematologist

Peacefully joined our Lord on July 23, 2006 at the age of 83.

His wife **Isabel**; children – **Vic & Desi, Menchu & Steve, Chona & Gerry, Jun, Loren** (†), **Joey & Didi**; grandchildren – **Joseph, Vince, Francis & Kathryn, KT & Paolo, Sean, Franz & Joshua, Justine & Julliene** request the pious readers to join them in prayer for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapel, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Thursday, July 27, 2006 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

WALDETRUDIS "WALDE" BERNARDEZ QUINES

of Bucay, Abra

Died in the Grace of our Lord on July 19, 2006 at the age of 78.

Her bereaved husband **Rody**, daughter **Rodeth** and son-in-law **Orly Alcabasa**; and grandchildren **Alexa "Ally" Rae** and **Anthony Ryan**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the St. Peter Memorial Chapels, Quezon Ave., Q.C.

Funeral Mass will be on July 27, 2006 at 9:30 a.m. at St. Peter Memorial Chapels. Interment will follow at Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Q.C.

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Hyundai Santa Fe sets economy pace on diesel

THE NEW HYUNDAI SANTA Fe is proving to be a fuel economy champion among lifestyle four-wheel-drive models.

In an independent fuel economy test conducted recently by New Zealand motoring journalist Donn Anderson, the new generation Santa Fe 2.2 CRDi diesel averaged 5.95 litres/100 km (47.44 miles per gallon).

With this result, the Santa Fe is able to complete 1,256 kilometers on the 75-litre fuel tank, an outstanding result for a roomy, 4,650mm long five-door Sport Utility Vehicle weighing 1,823 kg.

The test was carried out in "real life" conditions that included town, city, rural roads and motorway driving.

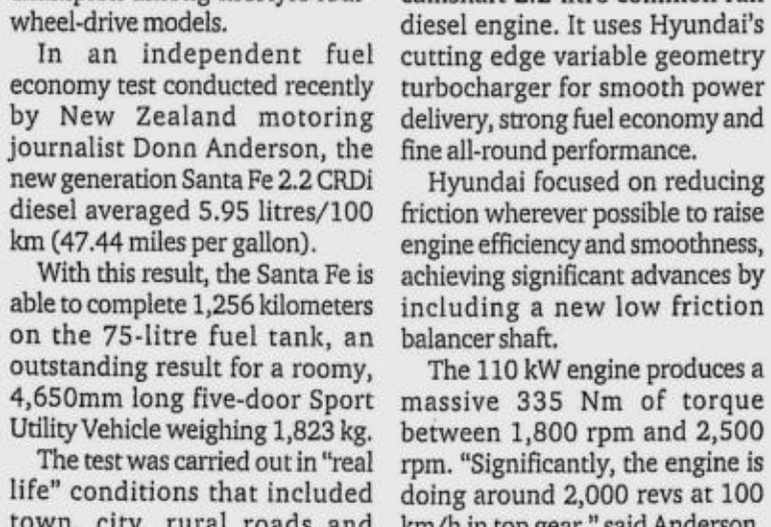
Anderson, who is currently working in Britain, completed the test in southern England where he endeavored to match the driving conditions to those in New Zealand. "The result certainly dispels the argument that all four-wheel- drives are thirsty and underlined the advances and excellent fuel economy of the latest diesel engines," he said.

The new Santa Fe CRDi is powered by an in-line, four-cylinder, single overhead camshaft 2.2-litre common rail diesel engine. It uses Hyundai's cutting edge variable geometry turbocharger for smooth power delivery, strong fuel economy and fine all-round performance.

Hyundai focused on reducing friction wherever possible to raise engine efficiency and smoothness, achieving significant advances by including a new low friction balancer shaft.

The 110 kW engine produces a massive 335 Nm of torque between 1,800 rpm and 2,500 rpm. "Significantly, the engine is doing around 2,000 revs at 100 km/h in top gear," said Anderson. "Peak torque is achieved at this engine speed resulting in the Santa Fe running efficiently while being responsive and flexible at our open road speed limit."

The test result over an extended distance bettered the official European extra urban fuel test average of 6.0 litres/100 km (47.1 miles per gallon), and the combined test average of 7.3 litres/100 km (38.7 miles per gallon).



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CREBA to launch 2006 annual convention

THE CHAMBER OF REAL ESTATE AND BUILDERS' Associations (CREBA), will launch its annual national convention during the Chamber's monthly business meeting on July 27, 12 noon at the Intercontinental Hotel. According to CREBA's vice president for public relations, Editha L. Manansala, the highlight of the kick-off ceremony will be the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding among its convention partners, Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Tourism, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, Board of Investments, and Philippine Retirement Authority.

Among the topics lined-up for the three-day convention are BOI Incentives, Ownership Aspects of the Dual Citizenship Law, Tourism Thrusts, Global Trends on Real Estate Investment, Use of Retirement funds for Corporate Housing, and Pag-IBIG Funding Programs.

The real estate convention held annually by CREBA will be held on Oct. 19, 20 and 21, at the Camp John Hay, Baguio, with its theme: "Pro-active Response to Property Trends and Opportunities".

Techie Bautista, CREBA convention chair for this year, said that aside from providing participants the rare opportunity to enjoy the cool ambiance and posh facilities of Camp John Hay, the convention more importantly aims to provide the forum for real estate stakeholders to be apprised of recent business opportunities and trends gathering momentum in the world's real estate market and the response thereto by Creba and its convention partners.

Pete Tario, CREBA's president said that the annual CREBA National Convention is the housing sector's contribution to this national effort of nation-building, by providing a national forum through which the stakeholders in the housing and real estate sector shall address current housing issues.

Interested participants may call CREBA secretariat at 373-22-70 to 75.

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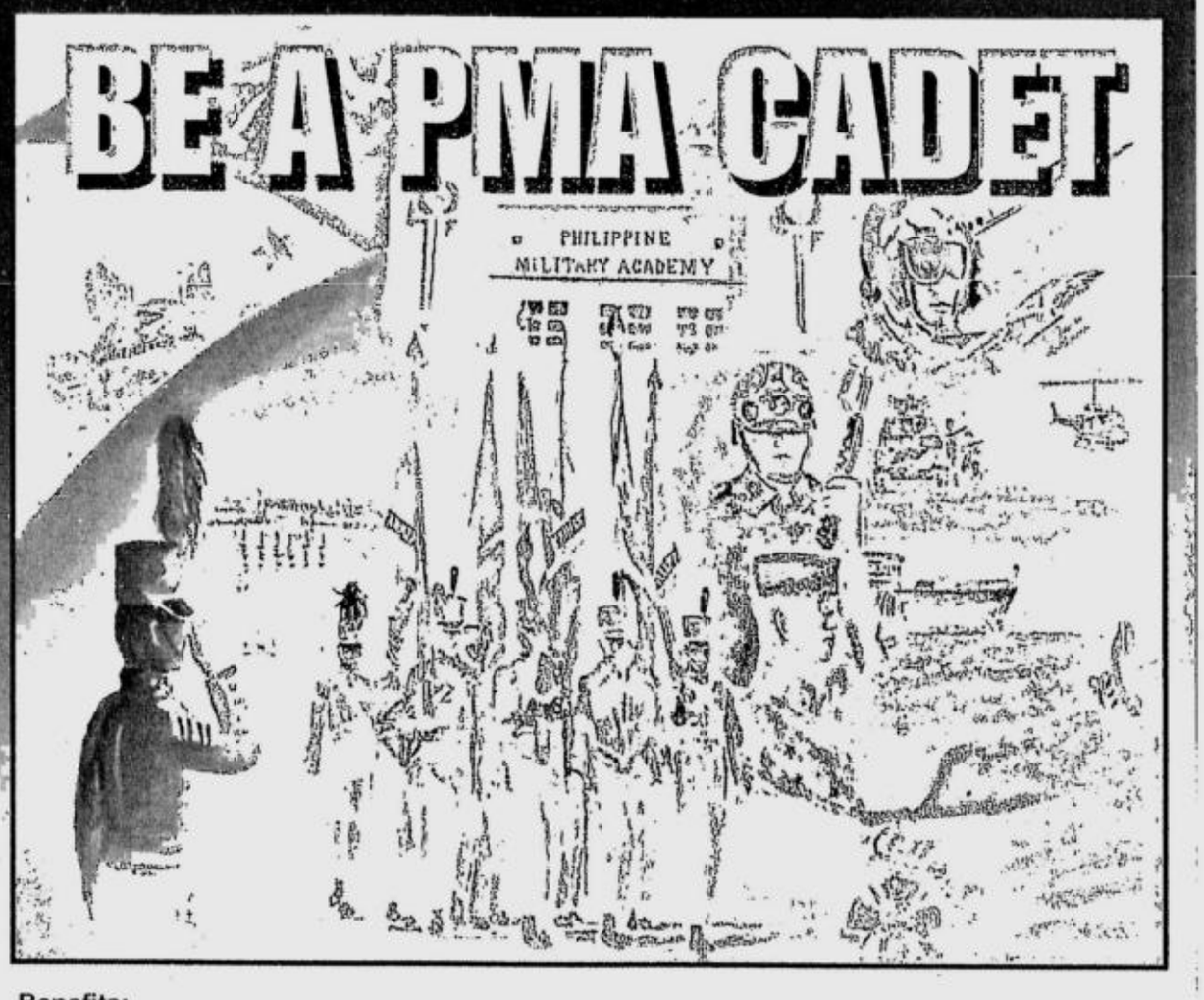

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For further information and specifications please contact: -
May Almudin - Tel: 63 2 852 2910/11 loc. 100
email: may.almudin@henrybutcher.com

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Rm. 102 JoKiland Bldg., 670 Edsa, Pasay City
Tel No.: 852 2910/11 or 854 4917-19 Fax No.: 831 9507
E-mail:manila@henrybutcher.com

ISABELA - 1 ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Victoria, Alicia, Isabela
Tel. No. (078) 6627103 • 6627983 • 6627810
Fax No. (078) 6627103 • 6627917

The Isabela – 1 Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Iselco – 1) wishes to invite interested suppliers for Public Bidding for the supply and delivery of Electrical Materials and Equipments as follows:

Schedule 1 : Pole Line Hardwares
Schedule 2 : Special Equipments
Schedule 3 : Wires and Cables
Schedule 4 : Poles and Crossarms

Interested parties may secure bid documents and checklist of qualification requirements at the office of the PBAC Secretary at Finance Manager's office or contact Mr. Rodolfo Acosta at Cel. No. 09192699574 or Engr. Romeo M. Villacampa at Cel No. 09189226973.

The schedule of Bidding activities are as follows:

PARTICULARS	DATE/TIME
Publication	July 25 - 27, 2006
Issuance of bid documents/checklist of qualification requirements	July 28 - Aug. 21, 2006 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Pre-Qualification conference	Aug. 22, 2006 10:00 AM - 12:00 NN
Submission of bids/Opening	Aug. 22, 2006 / 1:00 PM

Checklist of Qualification Requirements are the following: (To be submitted during the pre-qualification conference)

1. Non-refundable bid documents fee in the amount of Three thousand pesos only (P 3,000.00) in the form of cash.
2. Complete set of legal documents of the company, i.e., SEC Registration, Articles of Incorporation and by laws, company profile, business registration and license papers.
3. Audited Financial Statement (Balance sheet and Income Statement) duly filed/ stamped received by BIR.
4. If represented by an agent of the firm, it must have a letter of Authorization from the President/Management or Owner.

The ISELCO – 1 reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect thereon and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the cooperative (ISELCO – 1), The ISELCO – 1 likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **Mr. Vicente B. Del Rosario, CPA**
OIC / General Manager

(PDI--July 25, 26 & 27, 2006)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Republic of the Philippines

6CB-GSC-084

REPAIR OF VARIOUS VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENTS
(Name of Project)

205 items of different repair of various vehicles and equipment
(pls. see also details @ www.gensantos.gov.ph)

The Local Government Unit of **General Santos City**, through the CY 2006 Trust Fund Budget intends to apply the sum of Three Million Seven Hundred Thirty Three Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Five Pesos (P3,733,565.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the Repair of Various Vehicles and Equipment. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

The **Local Government Unit of General Santos City** now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Repair of Various Vehicles and Equipment. Delivery of the GOODS is required by 30 calendar days. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsive of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure

Interested Eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the **Local Government Unit of General Santos City** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

A complete set of Bidding Documents my be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of P1,000.00 to the City Treasurer's Office. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative

The Local Government Unit of General Santos will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested on August 10, 2006, 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon at the BAC Office, 2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **2:00 o'clock in the afternoon of August 22, 2006**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit equivalent to One Percent (1%) of ABC or Bank Guarantee equivalent to One and a half Percent (1 1/2 %) of ABC or Surety Bond equivalent to Two and a half Percent (2 1/2 %) of ABC or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be at **2:00 o'clock in the afternoon of August 22, 2006** at the **BAC Office, 2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City**. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below

The **Local Government Unit of General Santos City** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contact award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Bids and Awards Committee
Gina Y. Pigar
2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City
Tel. Nos. (083) 301-0553, (083) 302-7210
Fax: (083) 301-0553
website address: www.gensatos.gov.ph

(Sgd.) **NAEL JOSEPH D. CRUSPERO**
BAC Chairman

(PDI - July 25 & August 1, 2006)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region VII, Cebu City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

TRANSFER OF NFA STOCKS THRU VOYAGE CHARTER

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY, through its *Corporate Budget for 2006* intends to apply the sum of *Two Million One Hundred Twenty Six Thousand Pesos (P2,126,000.00)* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Transfer of NFA Stocks thru Voyage Charter of NFA Region 7. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The National Food Authority, Region VII, Cebu City is inviting all interested licensed operators of vessels/ barges whether owned through Bareboat/Time/Voyage Charter to apply for eligibility and to bid under the Letter Agreement for Vessel/Barge Hire for the shipment of rice from Cebu City, to various destinations as indicated below:

VOLUME SCHEDULED FOR SEA DISPERSAL

DESTINATION Province	Port	Lot No.	Maximum Quantity/ Lot (bags)	Freight Rate/bag	Approved Budget for the Contract per Lot
Southern Leyte	Maasin	1	20,000	31.50	630,000.00
Biliran	Naval	2	30,000	34.00	1,020,000.00
Western Samar	Calbalogan	3	14,000	34.00	476,000.00
TOTAL			64,000		2,126,000.00

Delivery of the GOODS is required upon receipt of Notice to Proceed until December 31, 2006, or upon completion of the services, whichever is applicable.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act."

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY and inspect the Bidding Documents at *NFA, Banilad, Cebu City* starting July 20 to July 26, 2006 from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders form the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of *Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00)*. The method of payment will be in cash. The Bidding Documents shall be reviewed personally by the prospective Bidder or his duly authorized representative.

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on *July 27, 2006 @ 2:00 PM* at *NFA Training Center, 3rd Flr., Banilad, Cebu City*. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on *August 08, 2006 not later than 2:00 PM*. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in an amount at least equal to, and not lower than a percentage of the Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid, in the following schedule and form or any combination thereof:

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of ABC to bd bid
Cash / Cashier's / Managers Check payable to NFA issued by a reputable commercial bank in Cebu City or	One Percent (1%)
Surety Bond issued by GSIS marked "Callable on Demand"	Two & a Half Percent (2.5%)

Bid opening shall be on *August 08, 2006 @ 2:00 PM at NFA Training Center, 3rd Flr., Banilad, Cebu City*. Bids will be opened in the presence of Bidders' representatives who choose to attend the bidding. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
RAUL B. CHONG
Banilad, Cebu City
032-232-1932
email address : nfaro7@cvis.net.ph
032-233-6095
website: www.nfacebu.net.ph

(Sgd.) **RAUL B. CHONG**
RBAC Chairman/ARD

(PDI – July 19 & 25, 2006)

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5389

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

Videoconferencing System under CK-602152
Approved Budget Php 4,650,000.00

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Mr. Winthrop Z. Gutierrez** starting July 17, 2006, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **July 21, 2006, 2:00 p.m.** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department, Ground Floor, Building 5 at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Office Wall Clock Time) of August 04, 2006**. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Later bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

(Sgd.) **FRANCIS M. DOLOR**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee I

(PDI - July 18 & 25, 2006)

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5282

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

26" Integral Spiral Type Stabilizers under FGK 60504
Approved Budget: PHP 16,984,000.00

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Ms. Maria Cristina Lynn M. Mercado** starting **July 18, 2006** and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **July 27, 2006**, 2:00 p.m. at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Wall Clock Time) of August 17, 2006**. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee I

(PDI--July 18 & 25, 2006)

BUSINESS

Gov't moves to ensure competition in power

Economic team to forge clear cross ownership rules

By Abigail L. Ho

WITH THE UPCOMING SALE OF generation assets by Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) and Mirant Philippines Corp., the country's economic managers are looking to forge clearer cross-ownership rules to ensure competition in the power industry.

"We are aware that we cannot totally eliminate cross-ownership, but we hope to avoid the creation of groups with enough market power to dictate the price of electricity in their respective grids," the economic team said in a statement.

The economic team includes the departments of budget and management, energy, trade, finance and the National Economic Development Authority.

The team said the ongoing divestments in the local power sector should not lead to a consolidation of market power.

The team, thus, encouraged private investors to put up new power generating facilities, especially in areas with a supply-demand gap.

The economic team noted that National Power Corp. was no longer developing new facilities.

"Clear rules on cross-ownership would provide an assurance to the millions of electricity consumers that their interests are amply protected," the economic team said. "These measures are meant to enhance competition and ultimately bring down the price of electricity in the Philippines."

Salcon to invest ₱900M in water infra projects

By Christine A. Gaylican

SALCON PTE LTD. OF SINGAPORE plans to invest at least P900 million in water infrastructure projects over the next three years, a company official said.

K.K. Tan, Salcon's general manager for water and environment division, said the company was looking at opportunities in water and wastewater treatment projects with local municipal and water districts under the build-operate-transfer system.

"We are willing to engage in water projects, whether it would be under BOT, as well as design and build projects required by local companies and local governments," Tan told the INQUIRER in an interview.

The company was recently commissioned by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System to build a P700-million sewerage treatment facility for the east concession area in Manila and other nearby provinces.

The company likewise completed Cebu Hilton Resort Hotel's 200 million liter a day water facility; Republic Asahi Glass' Manila water treatment facility; Victorias Milling Co Ltd.'s water treatment plant in Bacolod and Leyte and Hitachi Plant Engineering & Construction Co Ltd.'s water treatment facilities.

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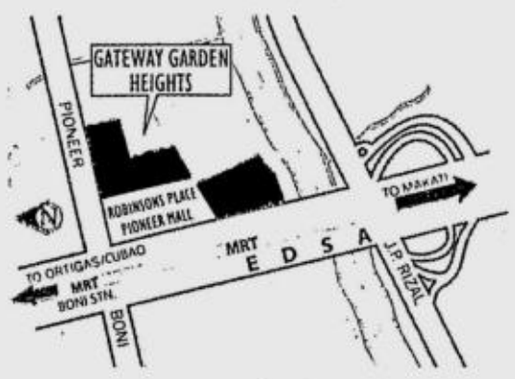

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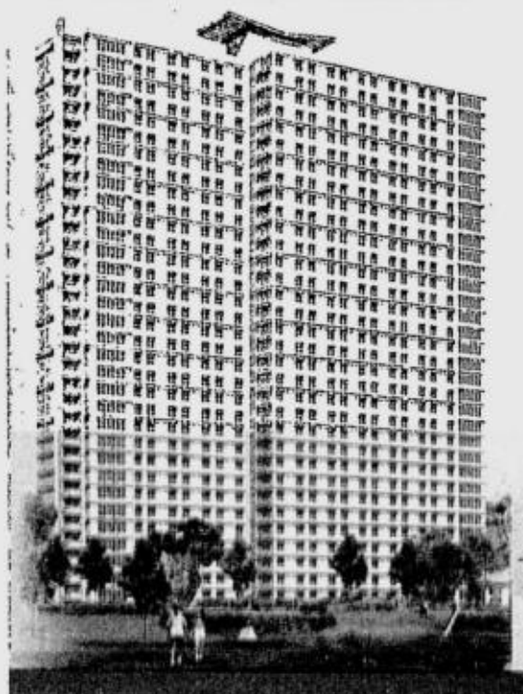

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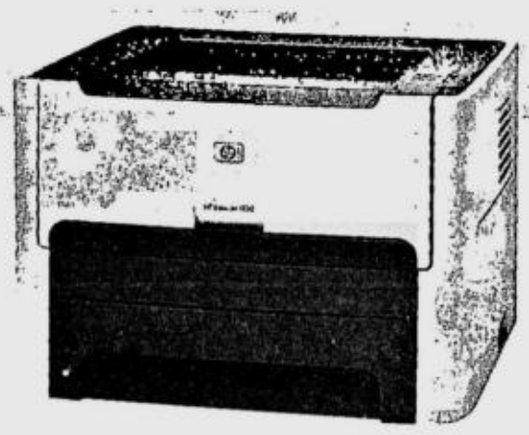

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PER DTI-NCR Permit No. 3509, Series of 2006

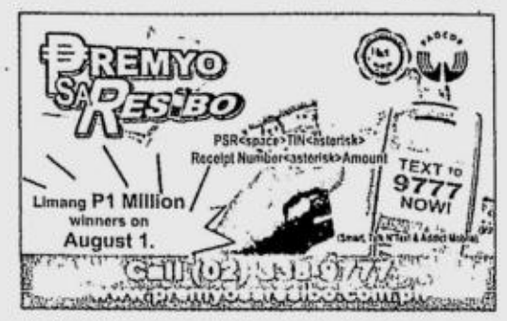
WHAT'S INSIDE

■ **Glorious feast to celebrate friendship** /C4

LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

sms feedback: Inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) **or email us at** lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph



Just do it–now

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

HOW DO YOU DO IT? I AM often asked this question. About five out of the 10 who ask are women in their 20s or older who may or may not know how to get started on a health regimen. Three out of 10 are gay who wish to have glowing complexion while the rest are men who are generous with their praises.

True story

Many years ago, I saw almost everyday a group of women in aerobics class. After class, they would ask me for the latest dieting tips and I would generously share my lifestyle.

Conscious of their appearances (they were all overweight) they diligently took notes and listened with great intent. Months passed but I noticed no improvement among them.

Each one had to lose at least 10 lb. But, instead of losing, they actually gained. And yet, the ritual continued—I would share lessons after each workout.

In truth, I was like a broken record saying the same things over and over again.

One day, after class, I decided to act out the role of good teacher. Giving them one hour lead time, I followed them to their favorite coffee shop for a "surprise" visit that was more like a police raid. I literally caught them in the act.

Their lunch consisted of *lechon, bulalo* and pasta, plus a platter of *leche flan*.

When I asked them why they chose those things, they proudly answered, "Look, you told us low fat, right? Well, see what we did to the *lechon*—we only ate the skin!"

Dismayed, I simply smiled and turned around. It was because of these ladies that I decided to write my book "Forever Young" (in English and now Filipino editions). Once published, the same group of women, let's call them the Indefatigable Five, asked me the same question, "How do you do it?" My answer was short and sweet: "Read my book."

There is no other interpretation for a specific regimen—you just have to take it at face value. Do not give it your own color. So, if it fails, you only have yourself to blame—not the author or the dietician or even your doctor.

Get going

The tips:

1. Stop talking about what you plan to do. Just do it—not yesterday, not tomorrow, but now. Give yourself a reasonable deadline and a schedule.

2. Set your doable targets today.

Obviously, a weight loss of 10 lb in one week may be achievable (assuming you avoid solids) but it isn't safe unless supervised by your physician or a medical spa (like the Farm in San Benito). So don't design your own program. Work with your doctor.

3. Follow strictly these general rules:

- Don't overeat. Stop the minute you feel full.
- Avoid fatty, oily and fried foods.
- Don't binge on junk food.
- No sweets after dinner. (Note: To slim down fast, declare a no-dessert/sugar week. It works!)
- Eat vegetables before any other viand. In fact, try to make your veggies the main meal.
- Train yourself to eat more veggies than meat.
- Drink 10 minutes after a meal (not during). Better yet, drink water before a meal. This helps digestion.
- Go easy on carbohydrates (especially white flour).
- Don't give up ever. Disciplining the self takes time. After a month, when you see visible and dramatic results, make it your lifestyle.
- Take your daily vitamin/mineral supplements. It isn't true they will make you gain weight. Don't believe in hearsay.
- Buy a body brush from any health store. Daily stimulation of your lymphatic system by brushing from foot to neck will detoxify you.
- Put your favorite dress or pants (or buy a new one, two sizes smaller) in a prominent place to inspire you to achieve your slimming goals.
- Affirm with me: "I am what I want. It is done!"

Love and light!

Celebrate Life with Cory Quirino and SM. Join the health, beauty and wellness day at the Mall of Asia on July 30, Music Hall, ground floor (facing the bay). Admission is free. At 6 a.m., there will be a sunrise walkathon and at 6 p.m. a sunset stroll. There are games, fun competition and raffles. Call 3674494.

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

The science behind your workout

Part two

BEHIND THE SUCCESS OR FAILure of your workout program are basic exercise science principles.

Runners don't have strong upper bodies unless they lift weights because the specificity principle states, "You only get good at what you train for."

If you exercise sporadically, you can't expect results because you are not giving your body enough of an overload for it to get fitter.

Here are some other scientific "rules" that control the outcome of your exercise regimen:

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

Overcompensation

This is related to the overload principle. It explains how the body adapts to any overload.

A simple example of overcompensation is a callus. It is the body's attempt to protect a part of your body that is being subjected to constant friction or pressure.

The body doesn't just repair the area with the same kind of skin. It overcompensates by developing slightly harder and firmer skin so you won't get hurt anymore. The more friction is applied, the more your body responds to protect your skin by making your callus bigger and harder.

The body does the same thing when you lift a weight that you are not used to. If you keep doing it regularly, the body will "wake up" muscle fibers that have not been previously used. After a period of time, and if you keep increasing the weight, the body will start making the individual muscle fibers thicker.

When you are training aerobically, the body will overcompensate by increasing the number of mitochondria (a cell structure where aerobic energy is produced) and capillaries and by making the heart stronger so it can pump more blood per beat.

Reversibility

Also called the "use it or lose it" principle, it is the opposite of overcompensation.

Calluses disappear when you stop applying friction (with a little help from a pumice stone or chemical remover).

It is the same with exercise. When you stop, your body will revert back to its original fitness level. This will not happen right away but you will eventually be back to where you started.

The body is very efficient. It will only compensate for what it needs. If you don't lift anything heavier than a coffee cup and don't push anything bigger than a computer mouse, then your body only needs muscles strong enough to do those activities.

So all the muscular strength you achieved from past workouts will disappear, together with additional benefits like firm, shapely muscles.

THE SCIENCE/ C3

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Front-to-back tie shoelaces lunge

STRENGTHENS THE LEGS, BUTtocks, and core muscles

Equipment

None

Exercise technique

1. Stand with one leg in front and one leg behind.
2. Bend down and reach for your shoe as if you were tying the lace.
3. Straighten up then pivot on the balls of your feet to face the back of the room.
4. Bend down and reach for your shoe as if you were tying the lace.
5. Straighten up then pivot to face the front of the room.
6. This equals one repetition.

Performance tips

1. Keep spine neutral—neither arched nor rounded.
2. Avoid bringing knee past your toes.
3. Modify this exercise by reaching a little past knee level instead of all the way down to the shoelaces.
4. Pivot on the balls of your feet so that knees are always facing in the same direction as your toes. This is to protect your knees.

Variation

1. Do not straighten up anymore. Stay in the bent position as you pivot front to back.
2. Be very careful of your knees. Toes should always be in line with your knees.

Repetitions

10 repetitions per leg (meaning ten reps of turning front to back). Do the same with your other leg in front.

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- Glutathione Precursor. 600 mg. P11/cap.
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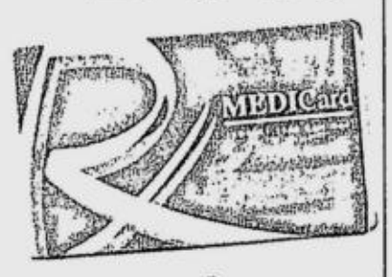
What are antioxidants and how does it affect my health?

Take Charge Doc!

"Antioxidant" is a classification of several organic substances, including vitamins C and E, vitamin A, selenium (a mineral) and a group known as the carotenoids (betacarotene is the most popular). At the molecular and cellular levels, antioxidants serve to deactivate particles called **free radicals**. These free radicals are natural by-products of many processes within and among cells. They are also created by exposure to various environmental factors, tobacco smoke and radiation which can cause damage to cell walls, certain cell structures and genetic material within the cells which can lead to different diseases. The antioxidants play the housekeeper's role, "mopping up" free radicals before they get a chance to do harm in your body. Like vitamin C has been found to prevent cancer-causing substances from nitrates and nitrites. In elderly people, especially those who have reduced their food intake, frequent aspirin users, heavy drinkers, smokers and people with impaired immune systems may benefit from taking antioxidant supplements daily. For heart diseases and stroke, antioxidants possibly slow or prevent the development of arterial blockages. Vitamin and mineral supplements should never be used as substitutes for a healthy, well balanced diet. Your best bet is to eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Sweet potatoes, carrots, spinach, cantaloupe and mangoes are great sources of antioxidants.

This week's answer to our feature question was provided by our medical service provider from Metro Manila. Dr. Bernardo E. Capuno Jr. obtained his medicine degree from University of Perpetual Help College of Medicine in 1995 and later completed his residency training for Internal Medicine in 2000. He is a diplomate of the Philippine College of Physicians, Philippine Specialty Board of Internal Medicine and the Philippine Academy of Medical Specialist. MEDICard members may visit him for consultation services at Alabang Medical Center during Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays from 12noon to 2pm.



MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

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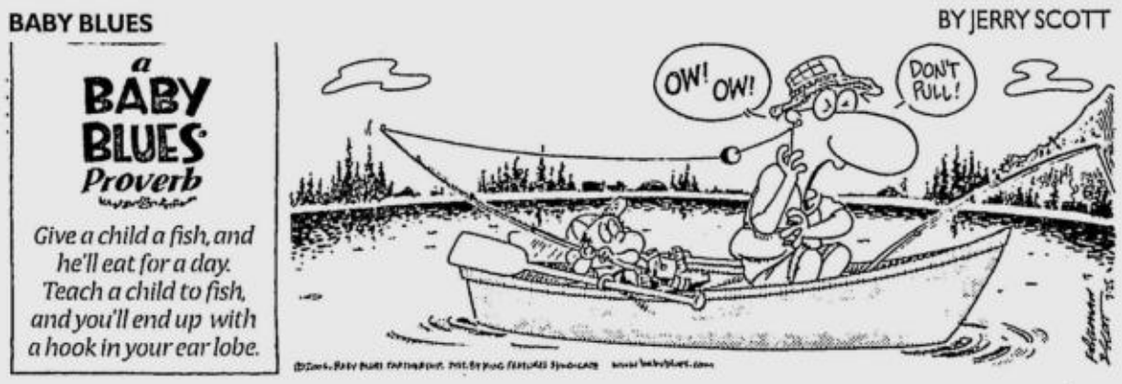
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND

A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT



PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

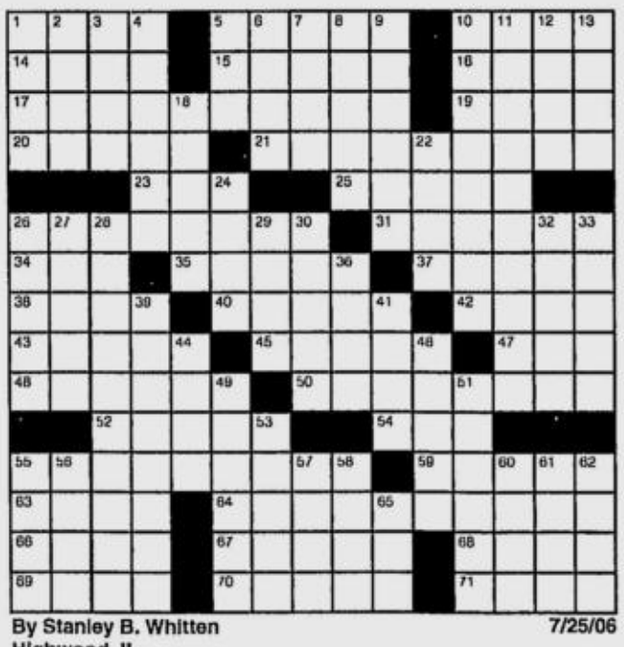
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA

MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL
7/25/06

ACROSS
1 Ooze
5 World-weary
10 Booty
14 Rhine tributary
15 "Waterloo Bridge" painter
16 Miami or Lima location
17 Banded timepiece
19 Mythical queen of Carthage
20 Express disdain
21 Became milder
23 Wee lad
25 Land or sea follower
26 Maui man
31 Not so fast
34 Expression of disgust
35 Former capital of Nigeria
37 Trunk tire
38 Serengeti stalker
40 Substructure for plaster
42 Bachelor party
43 God of Islam
45 Packs of paper
47 NASA's ISS partner
48 Appeared
50 Arboreal rodent
52 Dresses in
54 Wildebeest
55 Nasal sprays
59 Test composition
63 Leopold's partner in crime
64 Beneficial
66 Light, granite rock
67 "Taxi" dispatcher
68 Humorist Bombeck
69 Johnson of "Laugh-In"
70 Violinist Isaac
71 Darling

DOWN
1 Old adages
2 Merit
3 Canal of song
4 Former Spanish coin
5 Autobahn auto
6 Fertile soil
7 Against
8 Religious groups
9 Principles of conduct
10 Soft drinks
11 Rapids
12 Right-hand man
13 Yummy
18 Follow a scent
22 Dames
24 Ivory rival
26 Hawaiian dances
27 Limber
28 Sandwich bread
29 Lab gel
30 Musical units
32 Backspace
33 Kingly
36 O'Neal of basketball
39 Identifiable
41 Self-satisfied
44 Make well
46 Tendon
49 Southern accents
51 Charged a quarterback
53 Honker
55 Ingrid in "Casablanca"
56 Black as nuit?
57 Loyal
58 Move slightly
60 Stable parent
61 Operatic soprano Gluck
62 Birthday separation
65 Coop cackler

Monday's Puzzle Solved

S	H	U	S	H	■	H	A	H	A	S	■	S	O	S
E	A	R	L	Y	■	A	L	O	F	T	■	C	A	W
L	U	G	E	S	■	Z	E	B	R	A	■	U	S	E
F	L	E	W	T	H	E	C	O	O	P	■	B	E	E
■	■	■	E	E	L	■	■	■	L	E	A	S	T	■
A	S	W	A	R	M	■	A	D	I	E	U	■	■	■
M	I	A	M	I	■	O	P	E	N	■	R	E	D	O
M	A	D	E	A	B	R	E	A	K	F	O	R	I	T
O	M	E	N	■	E	A	R	L	■	O	P	A	R	T
■	■	■	D	A	L	L	Y	■	P	R	E	S	T	O
W	R	I	S	T	■	■	■	H	U	B	■	■	■	■
R	E	V	■	T	O	O	K	A	P	O	W	D	E	R
A	G	O	■	E	N	D	O	W	■	R	H	O	D	E
P	A	R	■	S	T	I	N	K	■	N	E	P	A	L
S	L	Y	■	T	O	N	G	S	■	E	N	E	M	Y

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7/25/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're imaginative, adventurous and playful. You want to have a good time; however, you're also very dignified and honorable. You live by your own code of ethics. You believe motivation and intention are everything. You're definitely a romantic. Work hard this year to build something important. Your payoff will come in a few years.
Birthdate of: Matt LeBlanc, actor; Iman, actress/model; Brad Renfro, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You're hooked by romance today. Flirtations, crushes and attractive people easily give you a thrill.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Continue to maintain your focus on home, family and real estate matters. Entertain at home. Efforts to make your home look more attractive will please you now.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You like to be busy. (You hate to be bored.) Discussions with daily contacts, neighbors and siblings are lively today. It's a good day to schmooze.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You might want to shop for home-entertainment systems or things related to sports and leisure pleasure. You want to buy something that is practical and long-lasting that also gives you enjoyment.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Both the Sun and Moon are still in your sign today, giving you an extra dose of good luck. Milk this for all its worth. Demand the advantage.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Work behind the scenes if you can. If you want to get credit for what you do, you'll have to work alone. With Mars in your sign now, you're more of a fighter for your own rights than usual.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You love to socialize with others because you enjoy the company of interesting people. Both the Sun and the Moon are trying to promote this possibility for you today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Quite likely, something will happen today that makes others notice you. Furthermore, the people who notice you will likely be teachers, bosses, VIPs and authority figures. (Look sharp.)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your appreciation of beauty is heightened today. Visit parks, galleries, museums and beautiful places. Take a short trip or a drive someplace different. Be a tourist in your own town.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a good day to discuss inheritances, estates, shared property, death and taxes. Find out what others expect from you. In turn, tell them what your expectations are.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Be extra-patient in discussions with others today. Both the Sun and the Moon are opposite your sign. This gives you the feeling that others oppose you when, in fact, this might not be the case.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Work hard to get organized today. Whatever you accomplish will please you. You get a sense of satisfaction by creating greater order all around you.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

	5			6		2		
6		7			8		3	
	8					1		7
					4		8	
3				5				4
	9		2					
4		2					1	
	6		7			3		2
		9		8			7	

Difficulty Level ★★
7/25

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	1	5	8	7	2	6	4	3
2	8	6	9	3	4	1	5	7
4	3	7	5	1	6	8	9	2
6	9	4	2	5	3	7	1	8
8	2	3	7	4	1	9	6	5
7	5	1	6	8	9	2	3	4
1	4	2	3	9	7	5	8	6
5	7	9	4	6	8	3	2	1
3	6	8	1	2	5	4	7	9

Difficulty Level ★
7/24

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Everyone has psychic power or ability

Part II

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

HERE ARE MORE QUESTIONS FROM THE Ateneo de Manila University's independent publication called Katipunan:

What psychic gifts do you possess?

Truthfully speaking, I do not possess any special psychic gift that is not possessed by everybody else. People have a wrong notion of psychic ability. They think it is possessed only by a few so-called gifted persons.

In fact, everybody has psychic power or ability to a lesser or greater degree. This is a natural talent, like singing or drawing. Everybody can sing or draw pictures. But some can sing or draw better than others.

The same is true with psychic ability. Everybody has it because it is a natural ability or power of our inner mental faculties.

People are often frightened by things they do not fully understand. What can you say about this?

It is natural for people to be afraid of the unknown, because we cannot tell whether it is harmful or not. For example, death is scary for us because we do not know what will happen after we die.

Do we just disintegrate like a bubble, or do we live again as a spirit? Do we come back to earth in another life, as the Hindus and Buddhists believe, or do we get stuck in a presumed heaven or hell?

Anything that comes directly from the spirit world is scary to the living because we have not bothered to study this field. The cause of our fear, therefore, is ignorance.

What is the antidote for ignorance? Isn't it "knowledge" or "fact"? Once we have knowledge or fact, then the unknown ceases to be mysterious. It becomes the "known." What we "know," we can handle already.

Does everybody possess the gift of, say, telepathy, telekinesis, intuition, clairvoyance?

Yes, but as I pointed out earlier, some people are better at it than others. That's all. But everybody is psychic, no exception, because the word psychic comes from the Greek word "psyche" meaning mind or soul. So everybody who has a mind or a soul is psychic.

The problem in the Philippines is people have falsely associated psychic with a fortuneteller or a person able to tell the future. This is absolutely wrong.

There are many forms or types of psychic powers that do not involve knowing future events, such as those you enumerated: telepathy, telekinesis and clairvoyance. There are also people who can do remote viewing, heal the sick psychically, communicate with spirits, but cannot tell the future. They are all psychics.

Is it possible to develop this psychic gift even if you do not have any, or must you be born with it?

We all have psychic ability, as already mentioned. No one can say he does not have any. This ability can be developed or enhanced. How?

The simplest and most important technique or method to develop psychic powers is through regular meditation. Fifteen to 30 minutes of daily meditation is sufficient to experience a growing sensitivity to psychic forces.

A special form of meditation to stimulate or activate the psychic centers (or *chakras*) would be faster. But this should be done under guidance of a knowledgeable person or teacher to avoid pitfalls or problems.

People can also attend seminars on how to develop ESP. For example, I conduct regularly a seminar to develop such powers as telepathy, psychometry, sensing the aura, psychic diagnosis, remote viewing and telekinesis. This is usually held in Makati but I can also conduct the seminar anywhere else in the Philippines, or even abroad, if invited.

In a world ruled by science and technology, how would you distinguish what is real from a hoax or trick?

We can use the scientific method to know what is real and what is not. But there are other methods. For example, we can ask several known psychics or clairvoyants to verify what other so-called psychics are doing. They can see if it is fraudulent, a hallucination or only a magic trick.

Remember what the philosopher Soren Kierkegaard said: "There are two ways to be fooled. One is to believe what isn't so. The other is to refuse to believe what is so."

Next week, I will answer questions about the Inner Mind Development Institute and what science has to say about paranormal phenomena and the mystical.

The problem in the Philippines is people have falsely associated psychic with a fortune-teller

The science behind . . .

From page C1

It is sad but true that it is much easier to "lose it" than to "use it."

Individuality

When it comes to exercise programs, one size does not fit all. Even if you and a friend follow the exact same diet and exercise program, your bodies will respond differently.

Human beings are similar in the sense that everyone has one heart, one liver, two arms, two legs, and all the other parts, but each of us has a unique genetic history that affects the way we respond to exercise or diet.

Some people have such responsive muscles that a few weeks of weightlifting is all they need to start seeing definition and firmness. Others need a few months before seeing any type of aesthetic results.

In an experiment done in Quebec University by exercise physiologist Claude Bouchard, 47 young men were put on an exercise program for five months. Some of the men showed 100-percent improvement in fitness levels. Others registered no change at all.

Even metabolism can be different from person to person. Obesity researcher Eric Ravussin proved this when he measured the resting metabolic rates (the amount of energy needed at rest for basic body functions) of 500 subjects. He found that some people burned 3,000-plus calories a day while others burned only 1,000-plus.

Some people are genetically predisposed to being good at aerobic-type activity and become champion marathon runners. Others are genetically inclined to succeed at power-type activities and win medals in powerlifting. Others have the natural strength and flexibility to excel in yoga.

This is why you cannot compare yourself to anyone else and also why you can't just blindly follow the exercise program of your fitness idol and expect the same results. He or she has different parents and grandparents.

Note: The Sports Medicine Association of the Philippines will hold its annual Sports Medicine Module Seminar on July 29. The event is open to students, coaches, teachers, and sports/exercise enthusiasts. Call 5219123 or 0917-3957102 or e-mail sportsmedphil@yahoo.com.

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info

New hand sanitizer in the market

PURELL, A LEADING HAND SANITIZER IN the United States, is now available locally in original and aloe scents.

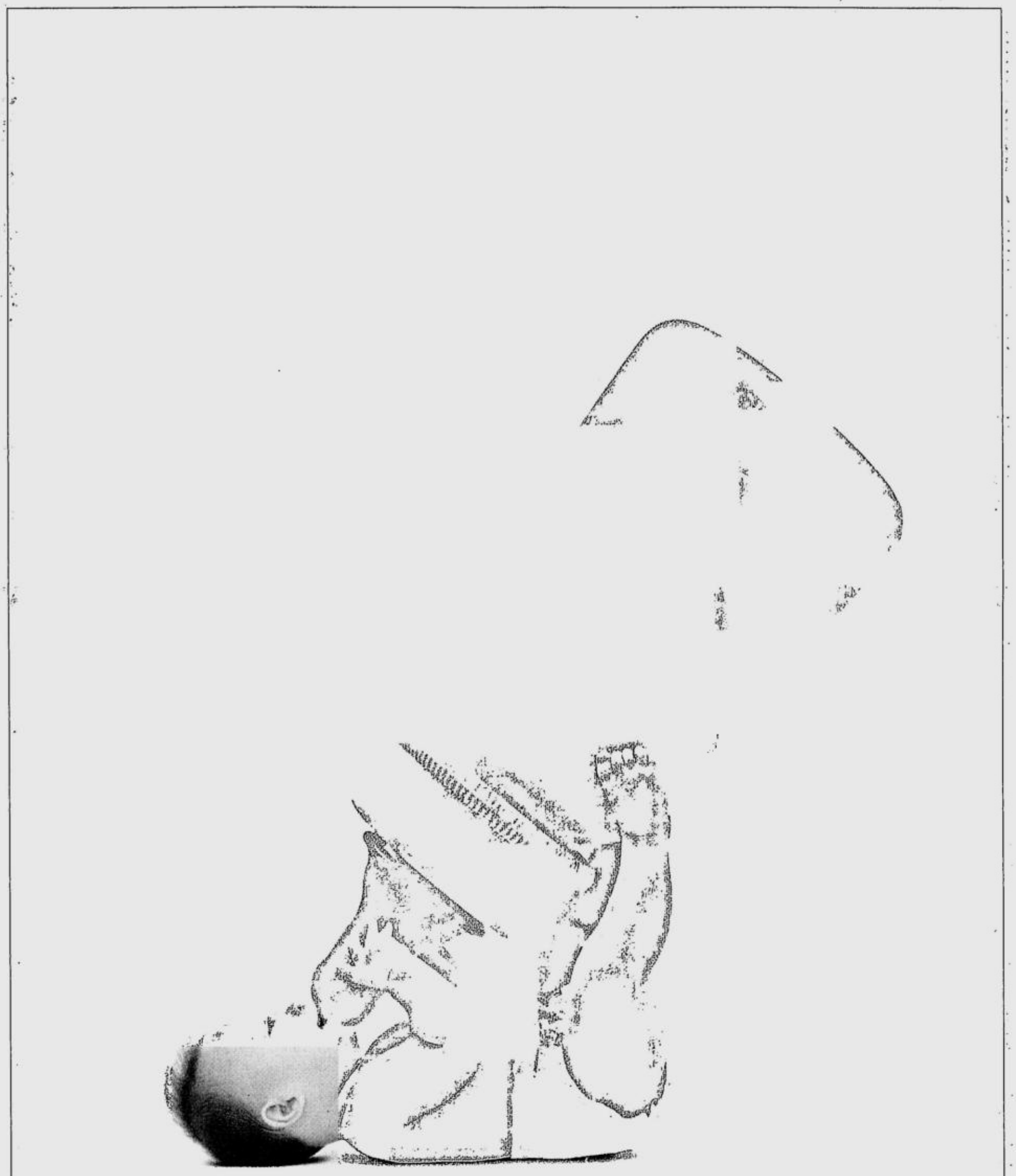
Hand sanitizers will help protect children from diseases since 80 percent of infectious illnesses have been found to be spread by the hands.

A study found that frequent use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers resulted in a lower rate of secondary transmission of respiratory illness.

Purell hand sanitizer has been shown to be effective against a variety of organisms, reportedly killing bacteria on contact. It contains emollients to keep the skin soft.

A US Food and Drug Administration study found Purell nontoxic and food-code compliant so it could be used immediately before meals.

A product of Pfizer, Purell is exclusively available in all Mercury Drug outlets nationwide.



GOV. CHAVIT Singson, celebrator Donnie Ramirez and host Bobong Velez

MABEL Abaño, Maricor Nieto, Nene Leonor, Jennie Zamora and Greg Alvior

HOWARD Belton, Mellie Ablaza and BMW's Joerg Breuer

An homage to friendship, a toast to glorious food

CESAR Sarino

MAY Neri

WILSON Tieng

FE Ng and Chit Salud

MONETTE Guevara

CHE Singson and Fe Rodriguez

BECKY Garcia

RONALD Gustillo, Imperial Appliance Plaza's Rudy Tiu and Jhoanna Benedicto. Imperial Appliance Plaza received special recognition for the increase in its large-screen television sales.

ANSON Emporium's Jenny Ng, Sony Philippines VP for national sales Toshiya Kagita, Anson Emporium's Joanne Ng, and Sony Philippines product specialist for Handycam Catherine Tan. Anson Emporium was recognized as the dealer with the highest growth in sales of the grand Wega and Bravia LCD televisions.

TWINKLE Rafael, Sony Philippines; Christianne Sherwin Tan, Avid Sales; Hiroaki Kobayashi, Sony Philippines; Susan Tan, Avid Sales; and Toshiya Kagita, Sony Philippines. Avid Sales was named dealer of the year.

ONLY 24 WERE CHOSEN TO ATTEND the super fun birthday dinner hosted by sports promoter and Mezze's main man **Bobong Velez** for his long-time pal and publicist **Donnie Ramirez**, *palanggas*, and held at Bobong V's Makati condo.

It was a culinary experience worthy of a fine-dining star, the splendid menu showcasing the extraordinary talent of **Christine Zarandin**, head chef of the Mezze Restaurant and Bar in Greenbelt 2. Christine trained at Wolfgang Puck's world-famous restaurant Spago's, in Las Vegas, dahlings.

For starters, foie gras was served two-ways—seared over baked apples and calvados, then as a mousse over toasted brioche with black currants. The wine was Chateau du Pin Bordeaux 2003.

Also served was Norwegian Smoked Salmon Salad, *naturellement*, followed by a yummy healthy dish of crispy baby cucumbers, red radish, fermented soy beans and organic greens, with a tangy tarragon vinaigrette dressing, blending perfectly well with Mont Gras Chardonnay 2004 (Chile).

The first entrée was Truffled Spaghetinni Pasta with sweet basil and bitter arugula, garnished with fresh chianti-chard parmigiano reggiano. The perfect wine accompaniment was Montes Sauvignon Blanc Fume Reserve 2005 (Chile).

The to-die-for grand entrée was Mignons of Angus beef tenderloin grilled with bourbon and hickory smoked bacon sauce, and garnished with turned vegetables and pommes a la Lyonaisse, so smoothly washed down by Montes Cabernet Sauvignon Reserva 2004 (Chile).

The grand finale was the magnificent Tropical Tiramisu a la Hurricane, a fruity, layered confection with rum lady fingers and mascarpone cream.

As expected, the fab dinner was punctuated by champagne toasts.

As our birthday boy Donnie R. said: "The affair was less a celebration of another milestone in my life, but more an homage to friendship." And, if *moi* may add, a toast to food, glorious food!

Cheers, *palangga*!

A PUNTA Bulata moment for Beth Jackson, Miren Zayco, Bing Ruso and Eva Abesamis (front row); Lia Bernardo, Toni Gregory, Annie Ringor, Jojo Zabarte and Georgie Baillet.

Georgie Diaz Baillet, Toni Gregory, Beth Jackson and Annie Ringor at Rio Diaz Cojuangco's crypt at the Pontevedra chapel

Retreat for the weary

"Kadto kamo sa Punta Bulata. *Katahom gid!"* ("Go to Punta Bulata. It's so beautiful!") So super lovers beautiful **Eva Abesamis** and *trés charmant* southern baron **Citoy Lopez** transported some of their close pals to Cauayan, an island in Negros and a few hours away from bustling Bacolod City.

Heavenly Punta Bulata is perfect for nurturing tired minds and bodies. The gorgeous deep blue waters of the Sulu Sea, home to exotic marine life, definitely calm the spirit.

New friend of Eva A. and Citoy L., **Bing Ruso** (widow of the late Finnish ambassador), together with cyber smart gals of Bridges@com, vivaciously fun **Annie Ringor** and **Toni Gregory**; fantastic couple **Georgie Diaz** B. and husband **William Baillet**, who was looking great; and international businessman **Henry Zabarte** surrendered to the allure of nature.

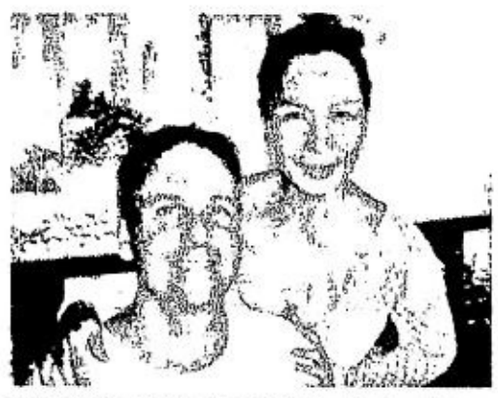
Jojo Zabarte and **Beth Jackson** went for the therapeutic sanctuary of the Ayu Spa. Metro Society's **Lia Bernardo**, whose newfound mission is to help the tired and weary through meditation, brought the gals to nirvana as she taught them the basics of meditation.

The fab pair behind the resort, **Bomber Zayco** and his wife **Miren Z.**, gave the city slickers a taste of Visayan hospitality, *palanggas*.

On the way to Punta Bulata, the gang briefly stopped at the sprawling retreat in Pontevedra of **Danding** and the gorgeous **Gretchen Cojuangco**, to visit the resting place of the late **Rio Cojuangco** inside the estate's chapel.

Aprés four fun and totally relaxing days, with the mind, body and spirit well-nourished and rejuvenated, the group bade "*hasta la vista*" to Punta Bulata.

Check out this wellness haven by the sea at www.puntabulata.com.


WILLIAM and Georgie Baillet relaxing after a walk on the beach

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

New products

Sony Philippines gathered its dealers from all over the country in a two-day conference at the Dusit Hotel Nikko, attended by notable personalities from high society and business. They witnessed the unveiling of Sony's spectacular new products.

Sony Philippines also honored its most outstanding dealers for 2006. Among the awardees were Avid Sales Corporation, Dealer of the Year for Handycams and Digital Imaging Accessories; Abenson Inc. for Sony Cybershots; and Star Appliance Inc. for large-screen televisions. Anson's Emporium was cited for registering the highest growth in sales of Grand Wega, projection TV Wega and Bravia. The Du Ek Sam Group was named top provincial dealer.

The most-anticipated award, Top Dealer of 2005, went to Avid Sales Corporation, represented by **Christianne Sherwin Chan** and **Susan Tan**.

Sony Philippines gave out the awards to thank the dealers for their kind support this past year. As the amiable **Toshiya Kagita**, Sony Philippines' vice president for national sales, said: "In our hearts, our dealers are more than just business partners. They are esteemed friends. This simple ceremony is our way of telling them, '*doumo arigato gozaimasu*!' Thank you very much!"

"It is because of your cooperation and trust that Sony Philippines is No. 1," said Kagita.

Aside from adding new models to existing product categories, Sony also unveiled a new category with the launch of the dangerously sexy Xplod car audio series, *palanggas*.

The wow Sony Xplod Car Audio Series has a complete line of head units, amplifiers, plus new AV products.

For more info, visit www.sony.com.ph or call 8787600. You can also go to any Sony store nationwide.

JULIE Gamboa, Rey Castillo, Robi Sison, Bonnie Gamboa and Joseph Vitug of Key Largo

METRO / A19

Pasig judge allows Dennis Roldan to post bail on kidnapping charges

BUSINESS / B1

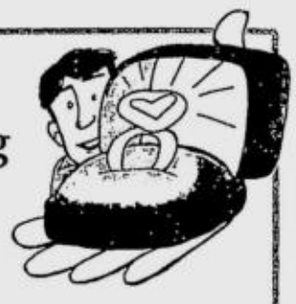
Peso, share prices post sharp gains

ACROSS / A16

AFP to clear 'super regions' of Reds

LIFESTYLE / C1

Read what it's like to be a young Casanova, a substitute mom, a disabled person and more



2nd batch of 225 OFWs arrives from Lebanon

By Nikko Dizon

A SECOND BATCH OF 225 OVERSEAS FILIPINO workers returned home from Lebanon last night as the Philippines stepped up its efforts to evacuate OFWs trapped in that war-battered country.

President Macapagal-Arroyo welcomed back the latest returnees, who arrived at Villamor Air Base in Pasay City on a chartered Jordan Avia-

2ND BATCH/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, July 26, 2006 ★★ 5 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 228 P18 website: www.inq7.net

17 Scout Rangers linked to coup plot sent to Tanay

By Dona Pazzibugan

SEVENTEEN OFFICERS OF THE ELITE FIRST Scout Rangers Regiment who are facing court-martial for their participation in the Feb. 24 coup plot yesterday joined their former commandant at the Army's maximum security detention facility in Tanay, Rizal.

Army spokesperson Maj. Ernesto Torres refused

17 SCOUT/ A11

Bolante seeking US asylum, says NPA hit men out to kill him

By Nimfa U. Rueda
Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—FORMER AGRICULture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante may yet escape deportation to the Philippines by seeking asylum in the United States where he is currently detained for entering the country with an expired visa.

Bolante is scheduled to ask a federal immigration judge here next week to grant him asylum because, he claims, communist rebels will kill him if he returns to the Philippines, according to a source who asked not to be identified because of the sensitivity of his work.

In his petition for asylum, Bolante will state his fear of persecution by the New People's Army (NPA), the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, which believes that his involvement in the P728-million fertilizer fund scam hurt the farmers, the source said.

The funds were disbursed to administration allies, purportedly to help ensure the victory of President Macapagal-Arroyo in the 2004 presidential election.

Bolante is scheduled to appear before Federal Judge DD Sitgraves in the immigration court at the San Pedro Detention Center in California on July 31, said Elaine Komis, the spokesperson for the Executive Office for Immigration Review. The EOIR is the US Department of Justice agency that manages the immigration courts.

At the preliminary hearing, Bolante is

BOLANTE/ A8

IN THE KNOW

What is asylum?

ASYLUM IS A FORM OF LEGAL PROTECtion given to a foreigner who fears harm or persecution in his or her own country.

In the United States, the Refugee Act passed in 1981 allows asylum status to a foreigner regardless of his or her immigration status.

To be granted asylum, an applicant must prove that he or she is unable or unwilling to return to his or her country because of "persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion."

A person applying for asylum must be in the United States or at a US airport or

WHAT IS/ A8

Michael Ray: I'm guilty

Plea deal means up to 10 years in jail instead of life sentence

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY—SPARING HIMSELF from a possible life sentence and sparing the US government a messy trial that could highlight weaknesses on how it guards its secrets, a former Philippine National Police officer pleaded guilty to unauthorized possession of US defense documents.

Plea may have saved Ping, Erap from suits

By TJ Burgonio
and Armand N. Nocum

HE MAY HAVE DOOMED HIMSELF to several years in prison but by pleading guilty before a US court, former police colonel Michael Ray Aquino may have also freed his supposed coconspirators in the Philippines from threats of prosecution.

"The charges of conspiracy and acting as a foreign agent were dropped, which means that no other persons will be charged any further in relation to him," opposition leader Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson said in a text message, reacting to his former protégé's decision to plead guilty in a US court to possessing secret documents containing intelligence information.

Lacson and ousted President Joseph Estrada were among opposition figures named by US prosecutors as having received classified information from Aquino and Leandro Aragoncillo, a Filipino-American ex-intelligence analyst of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The INQUIRER tried to contact Estrada for comment but he did not answer the phone calls.

Washington has not released the contents of the supposed secret documents Aquino got. US Embassy reports obtained by the INQUIRER last year—believed to be part of stolen US files—spoke of coup plots against President Macapagal-Arroyo and how a "deeply frag-

PLEA MAY/ A17

Michael Ray Aquino, 40, pleaded guilty Monday in US District Court to possessing secret documents containing information on the United States's confidential intelligence sources and methods, as well as information on terrorist threats to US military personnel in the Philippines.

But his lawyer denied that Aquino had passed along the information to anyone else.

During his plea, Aquino acknowledged that the documents he received had contained such information.

"That's not what I was interested in, but I saw them," Aquino told Judge William Walls.

The plea deal enabled Aquino to avoid an espionage charge, which could have sent him to prison for life. He now faces up to 10 years in prison.

Aquino is scheduled to be sentenced on Oct. 30.

Codefendant Leandro Aragoncillo, a naturalized US citizen who pleaded guilty earlier this year, had said the actions were meant to help politicians who wanted to overthrow Philippine President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"New Jersey is not the traditional locale one thinks of as a haven for spies," said Les Wiser Jr., special agent in charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Newark bureau. "This case showcases the stark reality that those who conduct foreign espionage activity will endeavor to exploit every available opportunity to ply their craft, regardless of their location or position of responsibility."

It also spares the US government from a trial that would have shown how Aragoncillo was able to steal hundreds of classified documents while working in the White House for four years.

Aragoncillo was a US Marine who worked as an aide to military advisers to Vice Presidents Al Gore and Dick Cheney, and later as an FBI intelligence analyst at

MICHAEL RAY A17

JESUS Y. ORBETA/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

MAYON VOLCANO UP CLOSE. This guide leads a team of volcanologists to take a closer look at the rocks thundering down the slope of Mt. Mayon. The close encounter Tuesday enabled geologists to gather rock samples for analysis. Clouds hid a view of the glowing summit Monday night.

GMA Sona jeered by foes, cheered by allies

By Christian V. Esguerra
and Michael Lim Ubac

REACTIONS TO PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo's State of the Nation Address (Sona) on Monday were predictably mixed, with one Catholic bishop saying that she had skirted around present conditions and his evangelical counterpart calling on the public to give her a chance.

In a statement issued yesterday, Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said the "dim and dismal" state of the nation was the reason behind the President's "futuristic approach."

Cruz said the Sona could be a preview of the "enchanted kingdom" that Ms Arroyo was trying to envision.

But Bishop Efraim Tendero, national chair of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC), threw his support behind Ms Arroyo's grand plans, saying they gave the country a "clear direction" and a "sense of hope."

"I join her in the call to work together for the good of the nation," Tendero said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

"I hope she will be able to deliver [on] the great plans and the people will work together to make them a reality. Let's give the Philippines an opportunity to move forward toward progress," he said.

Tendero represents a bloc in the evangelical denomination openly supportive of Ms Arroyo. The PCEC, an umbrella organization of about 20,000 churches, stood behind her last year amid allegations of fraud in the 2006 election.

Among Ms Arroyo's avowed plans is the creation of five "super regions" to spur economic development nationwide.

She said she planned to attract investments to these areas by making food affordable, wages competitive, electricity rates lower, and infrastructure modern and less costly.

But Cruz said that while the Sona offered "a vision of a great future for the country," he had serious reservations over whether Ms Arroyo—still hounded by accusations of poll fraud and doubts over her legitimacy—could deliver on her promises.

He said that to achieve her dreams, Ms Arroyo would need not only a sufficient budget but also unity in the country.

"Who would not want the 2006 Sona agenda

GMA SONA/ A8

'Glenda' originally 'Gloria'

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE TYPHOON THAT SWEPT through the country, drenching protesters and police during the State of the Nation Address yesterday, would have been named after the President dishing out promises inside the halls of Congress.

Typhoon "Glenda" (international name: Kaemi) was originally named Gloria by the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

Since 2002, Gloria was used to

GLENDA/ A6

Miffed, JDV acts swiftly on 6 impeachment raps

By Philip C. Tubeza

SEEKING TO DISPEL ALLEGATIONS that he was purposely delaying the fresh impeachment case against President Macapagal-Arroyo, Speaker Jose de Venecia yesterday transmitted to the House committee on justice the six complaints filed so far against her.

"Let it not be said that the Speaker of the House did not transmit one day after the opening of Congress the six impeachment complaints against the President of the Republic," De Venecia said, adding:

"Let it not be said, as some of the newspapers have said, that the Speaker is sitting on these impeachment complaints, although [he] has, under the Constitution, 10 session days, not 100 days, within which to transmit the impeachment complaints to the committee on justice.

"I've done my constitutional duty following the precedent we set last year."

In his speech opening the House session on Monday, De Venecia said he was "confused" as to which of the complaints filed by members of the opposition and private individuals between June 25 and July 26 to transmit to the justice committee.

Deputy House Minority Leader Gilbert

MIFFED/ A8

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 26, 2006

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon will experience rains and gusty winds and the coastal waters along these areas will be moderate to rough. Western Luzon and Palawan will have rains which may trigger flashfloods and landslides. The rest of the country will be cloudy with rainshowers.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/07/25/06 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Stormy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Stormy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Revival of old Mega deal eyed

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

FOLLOWING PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo's directive to automate the 2007 elections, Malacañang is looking at the possibility of dusting off the controversial counting machines purchased by the Commission on Elections two years ago that have remained in deep storage.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said this was one of the options being considered by the Palace, especially after the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) recently certified the workability of the automated counting machines supplied by the Mega Pacific consortium that were never used after the Supreme Court voided their purchase contract.

"The DOST findings have opened the door for the use of the automated counting machines next year. But we cannot decide on this just yet because the matter is still in the legal arena. We can only use these machines if either the Ombudsman or the Supreme Court or both allow us to do so," Defensor said in an interview.

Defensor noted that the use of the counting machines in next year's polls was among the recommendations made by retired Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. who had been tapped by President Macapagal-Arroyo as her adviser on electoral reforms.

'Above board'

"Chief Justice Davide had always maintained his position that the bidding for the Mega Pacific contract was aboveboard and that its machines were reliable," Defensor said.

The poll automation issue resurfaced after the President reiterated its importance in her State of the Nation Address on Monday.

"Regardless of the fate of the national budget, we must automate our election process," the President said.

The DOST presented its findings on July 20 to the Ombudsman, which is investigating Mega Pacific's criminal liability in the deal with the Comelec.

"During endurance testing, the ACR [automated counting machines] exhibited a 100-percent accuracy rating in continuously counting a total of 440,000 votes for a period of 14 hours," the DOST said.

In initial tests, 1,973 or 99 percent of the 1,991 counting machines purchased passed muster. The remaining 18 units, with minor defects in their LCDs and cable connections, were re-tested and 17 of them passed.

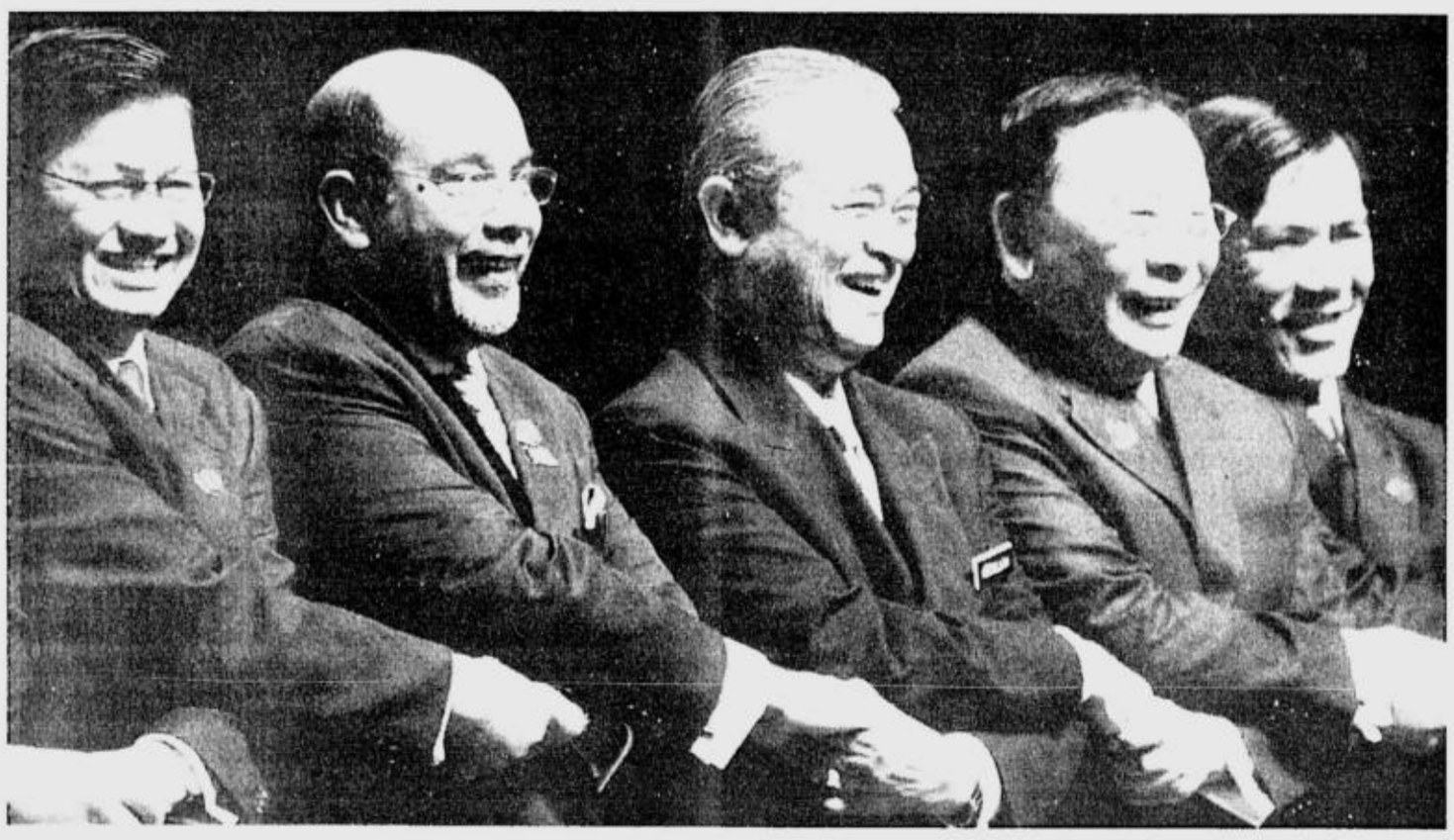
The DOST made the presentation to debunk claims by the losing bidder, Total Information Management Corp. (TIM), that the Comelec had awarded the contract to Mega Pacific despite flaws in the machines. TIM had offered a bid of P1.7 billion against Mega Pacific's offer of P1.25 billion.

Ineligible

The Supreme Court nullified the Mega Pacific consortium's contract a few months before the 2004 elections, ruling that it was ineligible to participate in the bidding for failing to show proof that its members—Mega Pacific eSolutions Inc., SK&K, WeSolv, Election.com and ePLDT—actually formed a consortium.

The high tribunal also ruled that the contract with the Comelec was executed with Mega Pacific eSolutions and not the Mega Pacific consortium.

The Ombudsman, which barely beat the June 30 deadline set by the Supreme Court to determine the criminal liability of the respondents, had recommended the impeachment of Comelec Commissioner Resurreccion Borra and five other former and current poll executives.



ASEAN MINISTERS AP

Malaysian Prime Minister Abdulah Ahmad Badawi, center, symbolically links arms with the Asean Foreign Ministers (from left) Laos' Thongloun Sisoulith, Malaysia's Syed Hamid Albar, Badawi, the Philippines' Alberto G.Romulo and Myanmar's U Nyan Win after the opening the 39th Asean Ministerial Meeting in Kuala Lumpur Tuesday. Southeast Asian countries opened a key security meeting, burdened by the lack of progress toward democracy in Myanmar and fading chances of hosting nuclear talks on North Korea.

War games with US commandos set

THE UNITED STATES WILL BE sending teams of commandos to the southern Philippines late this year to hold antiterror drills with local troops in the heartland of Islamic militants, a senior defense official said yesterday.

The Philippines, fighting protracted rebellions by communist rebels and Muslim separatists, already holds conventional annual war games with the United States, its former colonial ruler and long-time security ally.

"We've lined up a series of military training exercises and humanitarian assistance activities from the second half of 2006 until the first half of 2007 under the antiterror exercises to be called 'Kapit-Bisig' (Linking Arms)," said a defense official.

"The exercises would be held in areas where we believed the terrorists have a very strong presence in western and central areas of Mindanao."

The Kapit-Bisig war games will have three components; training and equipping local troops, giving humanitarian and civil assistance and supporting local military operations against Muslim militants.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz said Philippine and US military planners would be drawing up a five-year activity plan, from 2007 to 2011, to distinguish these exercises from conventional war games called "Balikatan" (shoulder-to-shoulder).

Most of the training and exercises done by the two countries since 2002 have been outside Balikatan, which tests the Philippine military's ability to thwart external aggression.

The defense official said the two countries were planning more exercises on counterterrorism, anti-narcotics and disaster preparedness. *Reuters*

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CHEd chair told to stay

By Alcuin Papa

MALACAÑANG HAS ordered Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) Chair Carlito Puno to stay put despite the fact that his appointment had expired last week.

In an interview, Puno said his term as Chair expired last July 20. But he added that "somebody in Malacañang told me to stay put and hold over."

"There is already a precedent where commissioners and the chair himself can hold over. Anybody can have two terms," he said, adding that he was "hopeful" the Palace would reappoint him as CHEd chair.

Puno explained that the Department of Justice had already rendered an opinion that he had already served his first term as chair and could be reappointed to another term based on Republic Act 7722, or the Higher Education Act of 1994.

Under Section 5 of the law "the President shall appoint the full-time chairman and the commissioners for a term of four years, without prejudice to one reappointment."

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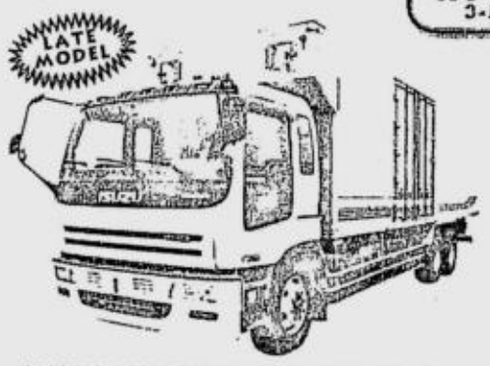

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After Sona, local execs press Cha-cha

By Leila B. Salaverria

EMBOLDENED BY PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo's endorsement of Charter change in her State of the Nation Address on Monday, proponents of the move to amend the Constitution yesterday renewed their commitment to their cause.

The pro-Cha-cha group Sigaw ng Bayan presented its legal arguments for a people's initiative as a way of amending the Charter, while Consultative Commission chair Jose Abueva lambasted the citizen's group One Voice for opposing the people's initiative and criticized Church leaders for joining the latter group.

Speaking at the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines summit at the Century Park Hotel, Abueva said the Compendium of Social Doctrines of the Catholic Church states that "the Church has no particular area of competence concerning the structure of the political community."

He said the late Pope John Paul II had also said as much.

"The Church respects the legitimate autonomy of the democratic order and is not entitled to express preferences for this or that institutional or constitutional solution. Nor does it belong to her to enter into questions of the merits of political programs except as this concerns religious or moral implications," Abueva quoted John Paul as saying.

One Voice, composed of bishops, businessmen and former government officials, has criticized the proposed shift to a parliamentary unicameral form of government, claiming that, among other things, this would concentrate power in the hands of the already powerful and would take away the peoples' right to directly elect their leaders.

At the summit, Sigaw ng Bayan head Raul Lambino said the group was set to file "soonest" the people's initiative petition that would shift the country to a parliamentary unicameral form of government.

He said it was only waiting for the voters' signatures in Makati City to be verified by the Commission on Elections.

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Palparan has role in peace process — Bello

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—President Macapagal-Arroyo's commendation of Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan's role in the anti-insurgency campaign would not affect the resumption of formal peace talks with the communist rebels, a member of the government's negotiating panel said yesterday.

Silvestro Bello III said the counterinsurgency campaign being waged by Palparan, who has been accused by leftists of human rights atrocities, "jibes" with the government's efforts to keep the peace process going.

"The more victories we win, like the victories being won by General Palparan, the better will be the peace panel's position because we must negotiate from a position of strength," Bello said here.

"I think what General Palparan is doing is contributing to the peace process," he added.

Ms Arroyo praised Palparan, commander of the 7th Infantry Division, during her State of the Nation Address on Monday, after she spoke of the projects to be undertaken in the Metro Luzon urban beltway, one of four super regions she has vowed to create.

"In the provinces covered by the 7th ID, Jovito Palparan has come to grips with the enemy. He will not let go until the communities in the long night of terror emerge into the light of justice and peace," Ms Arroyo said.

The police, meanwhile, virtually cleared Palparan of involvement in the extrajudicial killings.

But militants feared that Ms Arroyo, with her commendation of the general, has "openly endorsed massive human rights violations."

Philippine National Police Director General Oscar Calderon said Palparan has not been implicated in the wave of murders of mostly leftist activists.

"At present, we do not have any holdings, any witness to say that the officer is a suspect or (the one) responsible for the killings. It's all insinuation," he said.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Melvin Gascon and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Luige A. del Puerto in Manila

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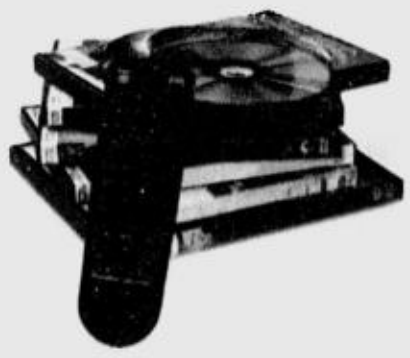

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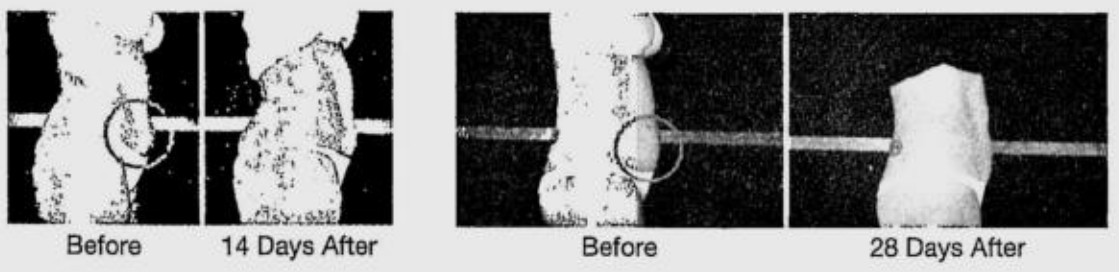

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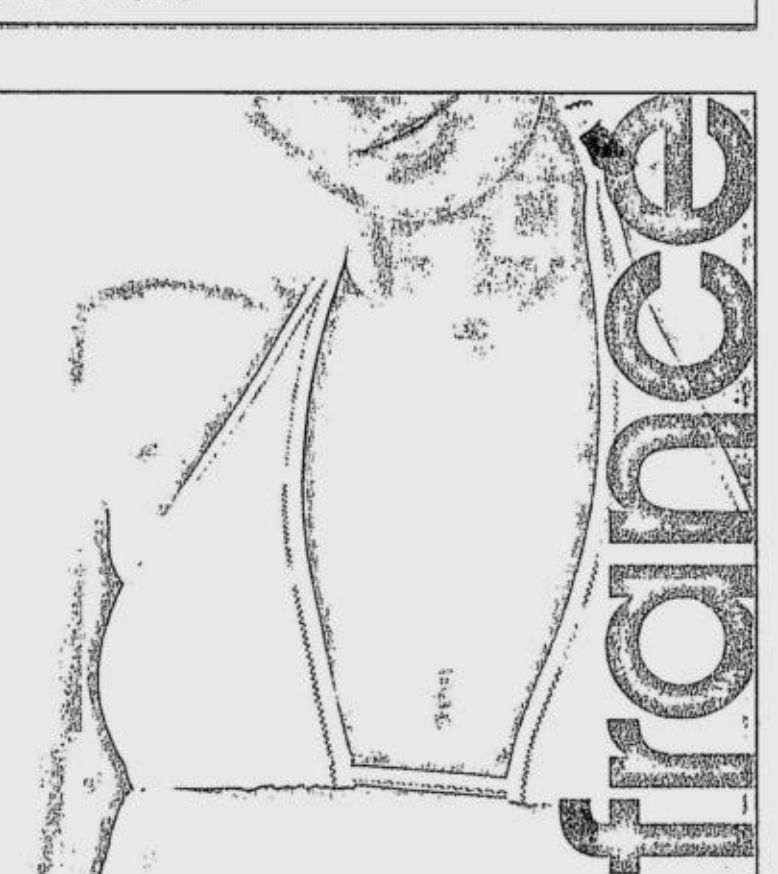

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Marie France

Manila Water to build P630M septage plant in Antipolo

THE MANILA WATER COMPANY is teaming up with Singaporean firm Salcon PTE Ltd for the construction of a P360 million septage treatment plant in Antipolo City after the project was commissioned to the Singaporean firm by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

The new septage plant, Manila Water's third plant that will be constructed, will rise in Pinugay, Antipolo and will have a daily treatment capacity of 600 cubic meters of domestic septage coming from 37,000 septic tanks desludged per year in the East Zone. Manila Water is also currently building two septage treatment facilities in Taguig and San Mateo.

"Improving the sewerage and sanitation system in Metro Manila is important to realize the goal of rehabilitating the Pasig River. This loan facility was acquired from the Asian Development Bank as part of the Pasig River Environmental Management and Rehabilitation Sector Development Program," MWSS Administrator Orlando Hondrade said after the contract signing with Salcon.

Manila Water has increased its capacity to provide sanitation services by acquiring 36 additional vacuum tankers. Manila Water now has 53 tankers which collect septage from individual septic tanks in the East Zone under its sanitation program being done in coordination with the various local government units. A free desludging service is being offered on per-schedule basis by the Company in coordination with the various barangays.

"By 2007, Manila Water will have completed the construction of the P330 million septage treatment plant in Taguig with a daily capacity of 800 cubic meters of sewage and the P285 million San Mateo plant with a capacity of 600 cubic meters of sewage. Funding for both of these plants were sourced from the World Bank, through the Land Bank of the Philippines", according to Manila Water President Antonino T. Aquino.

"Manila Water is also stepping up its effort to address sanitation and sewerage. The Company has completed the construction of 26 package sewage treatment plants and will be building more to process the growing volume of sewage that comes with the increasing population and to help clean the environment," Aquino said.

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Magdalo ex-comrades meet in frosty reunion

By Tarra V. Quismundo

NO WORDS WERE EXCHANGED BUT THE frostiness between them was too obvious to ignore when 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan and his former comrades-in-arms in the mutinous Magdalo group met up at the Makati Regional Trial Court yesterday.

Twelve days after renouncing the rebel group and reaffirming his allegiance to the government, San Juan appeared in court along with his former cohorts to face charges connected to their short-lived mutiny at the Oakwood Premier hotel in Makati City in July 2003.

But the handshakes, nods, smiles and small talk that marked their previous reunions in court were clearly gone this time around between San Juan and his co-accused.

The repentant junior officer, considered one of the bolder and more vocal Magdalo leaders up to the time of his recapture on Feb. 21, sat at the far end in the third row of seats, away from his usual seatmates in court.

San Juan, who escaped from Fort Bonifacio on Jan. 17 and was recaptured in Batangas one month later, returned to the government side on July 14 when he apologized to the nation and his family in a press conference at Philippine Army headquarters.

Yesterday, his former comrades—among them Navy Lieutenants Antonio Trillanes IV and James Layug, and even Army Captains Milo Maestrecampo and Gerardo Gambala who had earlier defected from the group and apologized to President Macapagal-Arroyo—had nothing to say about San Juan's turnabout when reporters asked them about it, but their body language spoke volumes.

While most of them exchanged handshakes and pats on the back, only one or two were observed extending a hand to San Juan.

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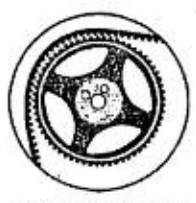
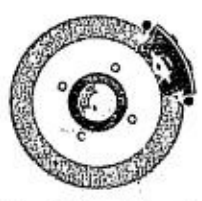

Replace Timing Belt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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

2 civilians in Magdalo lair plead not guilty

By DJ Yap

THE TWO CIVILIANS WHO WERE ARRESTED with six junior officers belonging to the rebel Magdalo group during a raid of their hideout early this month yesterday pleaded not guilty to arms possession charges.

Jose Christopher Belmonte, a lawyer, and Michael Yangson were arraigned yesterday in the sala of Judge Rosanna Fe Romero-Maglaya of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 88 on three counts and one count, respectively, of illegal possession of firearms and explosives.

The arraignment of the six Magdalo officers was also scheduled for yesterday but was reset to Aug. 9 after their custodians filed a motion saying they could not be brought to court because of a scheduling conflict and logistical problems.

The eight were captured on July 7 in a raid of the house they were renting in Filinvest II subdivision at Batasan Hills, Quezon City, a stone's throw away from the Batasang Pambansa complex.

The authorities found a blueprint of the Batasan complex as well as explosives and firearms, prompting them to believe the men were plotting to bomb the venue during President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address last Monday.

Belmonte was charged with possession of an M-16 rifle, a hand grenade and ammunition, while Yangson was charged with possession of an M-16 rifle.

Belmonte is a member of a prominent political family and had been previously arrested due to his ties to the communist movement and the rebel Magdalo group which was responsible for the failed Oakwood mutiny of July 2003.

Two of the captured Magdalo officers—Capt. Nathaniel Rabonza and 1st Lt. Sonny Sarmiento—could not make it to the arraignment because they had a hearing at a Makati City court on coup d'etat charges over their participation in the Oakwood mutiny.

The four other officers—2nd Lieutenants Angelbert Gay and Aldrin Baldonado, 1st Lt. Patricio Bumidang and Navy Lt. (j.g.) Kiram Sadava—failed to make it because the Army's Intelligence Service Group said it did not have enough men to escort them to the hearing.

Belmonte's lawyer, Ruel Pulido, who is also the counsel of Gay, Sadava and Baldonado, filed an oral motion yesterday seeking visitation rights for his three Magdalo clients, claiming his visits to them were restricted to less than an hour each because of the severe security restrictions at Fort Bonifacio.

With an AFP report

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, July 26, 2006
Joachim and Anne

1st Reading: Sir 44:1, 10-15
Gospel: Matthew 13:16-17

Jesus said to his disciples, "But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears, because they hear.

For I tell you that many prophets and upright people would have longed to see the things you see, but they did not, and to hear the things you hear, but they did not hear it."

Commentary

A day to look backwards to our ancestors, those who went before us in faith and passed it on to us by their lives, devotion and instructions. All that we have comes from others who were gracious in passing it onto us. They are buried in peace, yet they live in us and we are to take the time to gather and tell of their wisdom and how they praised God with their lives. And first and foremost we are rooted, sourced and given birth to in Jesus the Word of God made flesh. Blest are we because we have seen and known what so many generations waited for and did not see or hear.

Are we appreciative of our faith and heritage?

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NPC necro for Boy Togonon Friday

THE REMAINS OF THE LATE ART DIRECTOR and editorial cartoonist Romeo "Boy" T. Togonon will be brought to the National Press Club of the Philippines on Friday where necrological services will be held.

Togonon, one of the country's top editorial cartoonist and magazine and newspaper designer, died on Thursday of a heart attack. He was 55.

He was one of the longest serving directors of the NPC and was elected to the board last May.

Among those who will speak at the necrological service are: Enrique P. Romualdez, editor-in-chief of Malaya; Adrian Cristobal, Manila Bulletin columnist, NPC President Roy Mabasa, Rolando Estabillo, president of Samahang Plaridel and vice president for corporate communications of Philippine Airlines; Philippine Daily Inquirer news editor Artemio Engracia Jr.; Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn; former journalist Jose Capadocia; and INQUIRER columnist Neal H. Cruz.

Togonon's eldest son Leonardo will deliver the response for the family.

Togonon's remains will stay overnight at the NPC. He will be buried Saturday at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque after a morning Mass.

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13 Filipino sailors rescued off Alaska

LOS ANGELES—THE US COAST Guard said helicopter rescue units had rescued all 23 crew members including 13 Filipinos from a Singapore-based container ship that was taking water and badly listing off the coast of Alaska.

"Aside from one crew member with a broken leg who will be taken to Anchorage (Alaska) for medical attention, there were no reported injuries" after the rescue operation ended late Monday, the guard said in a statement.

The Cougar Ace sent a distress call on Sunday night some 400 kilometers (240 miles) south of the Aleutian Islands, after leaving Japan on Saturday on its way to Vancouver, Canada.

The ship, said the Coast Guard, was listing 80 degrees, taking on water and leaking fuel. "There's a two-mile sheen behind" the vessel, said Coast Guard spokesman Thomas McKenzie.

Spectacular photographs shot from Coast Guard helicopters show the Cougar Ace lying on its port (left) side, with its propeller sticking out of the water.

The 200-meter ship was carrying a load of 4,800 cars when it sent its SOS call.

A Coast Guard HH-60 Jayhawk rescue helicopter and two Air National Guard Pavehawk helicopters took part in the rescue operation, which lasted a little over one hour.

Two merchant vessels were also standing by in the area in case more assistance was needed, the statement said.

It remained uncertain what caused the ship, built in 1993, to list.

The craft is owned by Mitsui O.S.K. Lines. Its crew members hailed from the Philippines (13), Myanmar (8) and Singapore (2). *AFP*

3 Metro cities hit hard by floods triggered by typhoon 'Glenda'

WAIST-DEEP FLOODS TRIGgered by typhoon "Glenda" forced at least 2,600 people to flee their homes in Metro Manila, civil defense officials said.

The evacuees, most of them from Valenzuela City, sought shelter in schools or with relatives after the typhoon unleashed heavy rains on the northern Philippines, the officials said.

The cities of Malabon and Navotas were also hit by flooding but local officials did not immediately release evacuation figures in those areas.

Glenda passed near the Philippines on Monday before heading to Taiwan, but the heavy rains continued into Tuesday, forcing the government to cancel classes for two days in Manila and the northern provinces.

The rains also destroyed crops in the Ilocos region. The agriculture department initially placed the damage at P60,000.

While the rains have destroyed crops, they can increase the yields in corn farms in Cagayan Valley, according to the Department of Agriculture and corn farmers.

Corn production

Cagayan Valley is the country's second largest corn-growing area.

Last year's corn production in the region, particularly in Isabela, was severely affected by drought, prompting a number of farmers to shift to other crops, said Isidro V. Acosta, chair of the Regional Agricultural and Fishery Council. RAFC is composed of farmers and representatives of other sectors and the Department of Agriculture.

"Corn farmers are now at various planting stages and the rains have been beneficial to our crops," Acosta told the INQUIRER.

He noted that some 156,000 hectares had been planted to corn in Isabela and 100,000 hectares in Cagayan Valley are being prepared for corn production.

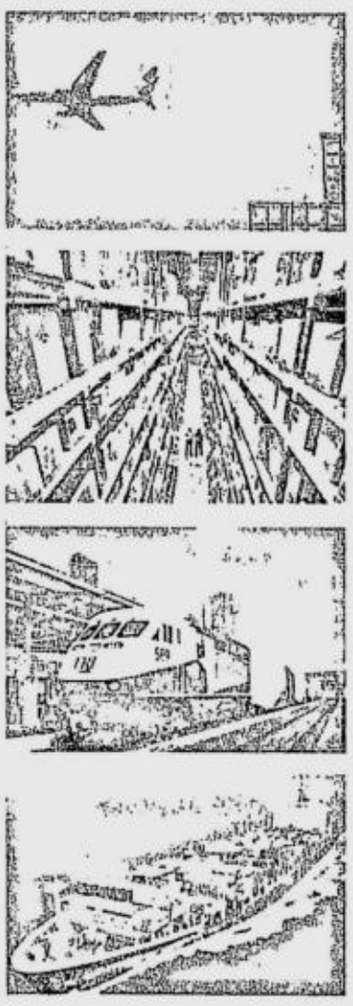
The corn harvest is expected between September and November.

Cagayan Valley accounts for a third of the country's total corn production, which averages 5.25 million metric tons a year, according to the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS).

Initial surveys by the BAS in April found that standing corn crops may yield 2.66 million metric tons in the first semester, an increase of 35 percent from the 1.97 million metric tons produced in the same period last year.

Areas planted to rice are also expected to grow because of the rains. Frisco Malabanan, the DA's rice program director, said no less than 300,000 hectares of rain-fed lowland areas could be planted to the staple. Upland areas also produce rice.

The country's rice production could reach an all-time high of 14.4 million metric tons by the end of the year, according to Malabanan. *Reports from AFP and Christine Gaylican*



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'Glenda' changed from 'Gloria' due to GMA

From page A1

identify the seventh typhoon that enters the Philippine area of responsibility. It was changed to Glenda last year after President Macapagal-Arroyo won the 2004 presidential election amid charges of cheating.

The change was done to dissociate Ms Arroyo from any damage that could be caused by the tropical cyclone.

"If the tropical cyclone became destructive, it could be associated with the President. So we changed it last year," said a Pagasa source, who asked not to be named to protect his job in the government agency.

Some 20 tropical cyclones enter the country's area of responsibility every year.

Darna producer

Pagasa weather branch chief Nathaniel Cruz said typhoon names that might have negative associations with real persons were changed. These included Darna, Jolina and Jawo.

A child of Darna producer Mars Ravelo had sought to remove Darna as a tropical cyclone name because Darna was known as a defender of the oppressed and should not be associated with a weather disturbance that could cause damage.

The manager of singer Jolina Magdangal cited the same reason when he sought the removal of Jolina from the list of cyclone names, while basketball fans complained about naming a typhoon after Jawo (the nickname of Robert Jaworski) who is a hero to them.

Pagasa has four groups of names for tropical cyclones, which are arranged alphabetically. The lists are alternately used, going back to the first group in the fifth year.

Out of the country

"Nobody paid any attention to Gloria before; we just wanted it to sound better," Cruz said in a phone interview. "Never did we imagine that during a Sona there would be a typhoon like Glenda."

After enhancing the monsoon winds that caused days of continuous rains in Metro Manila and most of Luzon, Glenda left the Philippines and moved to the southeastern coast of China. It weakened after hitting a land mass.

The heavy rains forced the government to cancel classes for two consecutive days in Metro Manila and the northern provinces.

Signal No. 1 remained hoisted over the Batanes Group of Islands, Calayan Group of Islands, Babuyan Island, Ilocos Provinces, Abra, La Union, Pangasinan, Zambales and Bataan, according to Pagasa's 5 p.m. typhoon update yesterday.

The weather bureau said Metro Manila would continue to experience rains until tomorrow but not as frequently as in the past three days.

Sunny skies can be expected from Thursday to Saturday as no cyclone has been monitored near the country's area of responsibility, the agency said.

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Bolante seeking US asylum, says NPA hit men out to kill him

From page A1

expected to seek asylum as a defense against deportation.

Bolante, who remains at the San Pedro Detention Center, will be given a "full and fair hearing," Virginia Kice, spokesperson of the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Beyond reach?

Even if asylum is not granted, Bolante may still be beyond the reach of Philippine authorities.

Los Angeles-based lawyer Roman Mosqueda, who has handled numerous asylum cases, said asylum proceedings could take up to two years.

If the petition is rejected, the asylum seeker can appeal the case. The appeal can take another two years to reach resolution, he said.

While awaiting the verdict on an asylum case, the petitioner remains in the United States and cannot be extradited to the country of origin, according to Mosqueda.

Bolante left the Philippines last year, after snubbing repeated summonses to a Senate inquiry into the disbursement of fertilizer funds.

On July 7, Bolante flew into Los Angeles from Seoul supposedly carrying a canceled B1/B2 visa, and was arrested by US immigration authorities at the airport.

Systematic theft

After wrapping up its inquiry in March, the Senate agriculture committee recommended the filing of charges against Bolante and several other current and former agriculture officials for their role in what it called "premeditated, systematic" agricultural theft.

Senators want the Office of the Ombudsman to speed up its investigation of the fertilizer fund scam and to file charges against Bolante to facilitate his extradition to Manila.

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, a militant farmers' group, also called for Bolante's immediate extradition.

However, Bolante's asylum petition might have made his extradition a far-fetched possibility.

"Once the (asylum) process has started, it will take its own course," Mosqueda said. "No one can be extradited until the proceedings are terminated."

No safe haven program

Even the Bush administration's "No Safe Haven" program that aims to crack down on corrupt foreign officials or former officials cannot supersede asylum laws, the lawyer said.

"Even President Bush will have to respect the asylum seeker's right to the process of asylum laws," Mosqueda said.

If the judge finds a "credible" or well-founded fear of persecution, the asylum will be granted and the person can stay in the United States for one year. After one year, the person can become a permanent resident, the lawyer said.

What is asylum?

From page A1

border and apply within one year of his or her arrival in the US, unless there are extraordinary circumstances.

The applicant undergoes an interview and a decision on the application is made within 180 days after the application is filed.

Under the expedited removal law, an asylum seeker is subject to mandatory detention. He or she remains in jail until a decision on the application is made.

If the applicant satisfies the legal requirements, he or she will be considered a "refugee" under US law and will have asylee status. If not, the immigration judge or other US official shall issue a denial and an order of deportation.

As an asylee, one may live and work in the US and even bring his or her family over. Moreover, a year after the granting of asylum, an asylee is entitled to apply to become a permanent US legal resident.

A person's asylee status may be terminated if there is no longer a well-founded fear of persecution, if he or she has obtained protection from another country, or if he or she has committed certain crimes or engaged in other activity that makes him or her ineligible to retain asylum status in the US.

Mel Lawrence de Guzman, PDI Research

GMA's Sona jeered by foes, cheered by friends

From page A1

to become realities as envisioned and designed by the present national leadership?" the archbishop said.

"But then, if the same national leadership cannot even clean the country of a stupid illegal numbers game like 'jueteng,' it is quixotic for it to even imagine that it can deliver on so many fantastic and grandiose national projects," he said.

'No new taxes'

The President is expected to spend P1 trillion to build airports, roads, ports and other tourism facilities envisioned under the planned "super regions."

The program is expected to be completed when her term ends in 2010 and will require shifting a huge part of the financial burden to local government units (LGUs), according to Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, chair of the House appropriations committee.

"Read my lips—no new taxes," said Salceda, stressing that the Sona showcased the Medium Term Public Investment Program, which, he pointed out, would hardly make it to the front pages on its own.

"With the expanded value-added tax and a behaved Bureau of Customs and Bureau of Internal Revenue, the national government can readily finance P1.21 trillion of infrastructure from 2006 to 2010," Salceda said.

He said LGUs, government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) and build-operate-transfer (BOT) schemes were mandated to pitch in.

He added: "The issue is no longer funding [but] rather an absorptive capacity and social desirability or alternative priorities—i.e., social expenditures versus infrastructure.

"That's the problem with the minority in their fixation with ousting the President. They abdicate their equally important role of scrutinizing the planning and programming, save to jeer."

Oversight on education

But incoming Education Secretary Jesli Lapus lamented the President's failure to address the needs of the education sector.

According to the former Tarlac lawmaker, it might have been an oversight because the Constitution mandates that education be the highest priority in budgetary allocations.

"Maybe that part about investment in human resources [such as education] was just omitted by her speechwriter," said Lapus, who stressed that education spending had "the highest return on investment."

Meanwhile, Anak ng Mindanao Rep. Mujiv Hataman assailed Ms Arroyo for citing the presence of the Jollibee fast-food chain in Isabela, Basilan, ostensibly to prove that development had come to the war-torn area.

"Are we now to assume that having a Jollibee outlet in a certain locality is the yardstick of progress of this President?" said the party-list representative who is a native of Basilan.

Hataman said using Jollibee as a gauge to measure development was "too narrow-minded."

"Is this how this government will solve poverty and well-entrenched corruption in [Basilan]?" he said.

Supplemental budget

The chair of the Senate ways and means committee was cool to Ms Arroyo's call for Congress to pass a supplemental budget to cover the local governments' internal revenue allotment (IRA) and the automation of elections.

Administration Sen. Ralph Recto said it would be absurd of Congress to go through the tedious process of passing a supplemental budget because it was already deliberating on the proposed P1.053-trillion national budget for 2006.

"Why talk about a supplemental budget and go back to square one?" Recto said in a phone interview. "It doesn't make sense to me."

Quoting news reports, Recto said Ms Arroyo had proposed a supplemental budget ranging from P40 billion to P50 billion.

But Recto said he preferred that Congress pass the 2006 budget, which carries a P166.4-billion allocation for the IRA alone.

If the 2006 budget is approved, there would be a fresh contingency fund that Ms Arroyo can use to finance automated polls, he said.

"There's a better chance of passing the 2006 budget if we don't confuse it with the supplemental budget," Recto said. "She's [also] about to submit the 2007 budget. Does she want to debate the supplemental budget, 2006 budget and 2007 budget at the same time?"

Both the Senate and the House failed to pass the 2006 budget before they adjourned their second regular session on June 8. Bicameral talks fell through because of strong disagreements over the cuts made by the Senate.

The House adopted Malacañang's proposed P1.053-trillion outlay, but the Senate slashed some P64 billion from it, including certain lump-sum appropriations.

"Does she want a smaller budget? How will she fund her super regions?" Recto said.

Biggest chunk

Only two years ago, GOCCs were being blamed for sinking the government deeper in debt with their losing operations and lavish executive perks.

But yesterday at a briefing, Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya said GOCCs would shoulder the biggest chunk—or P96.5 billion—of the estimated P207.8 billion worth of projects for the President's "super regions."

He said the national government would account for P74.1 billion, the private sector through BOT contracts for P36.8 billion, and LGUs, P400 million.

Andaya expressed confidence that since the government would shoulder only 36 percent of the capital investment budget, it would be able to generate revenues to finance its share without resorting to massive borrowings.

He said that revenue collections were expected to grow by as much 14 percent a year, and that the government was sticking to its target of wiping out the budget deficit in two years.

Among the GOCCs that the government is planning to use as a proxy for its borrowing binge is the National Development Co., one of the top five loss-making GOCCs last year, which is floating P10 billion worth of bonds later this year.

'Nothing new'

Malacañang was unfazed by the opposition's "counter-Sonas."

"They are not saying anything new. They have not done their homework in trying to show what kind of situation we have," Michael Defensor, Ms Arroyo's chief of staff, told reporters.

Defensor said the opposition had yet again resorted to raising "rehashed issues."

"If I were the opposition, I would point out the mistakes of what we are doing now, or the policies that are wrong or not grounded," he said.

Defensor also dismissed some opposition lawmakers' criticism that Ms Arroyo's development plans were a mere fairy tale.

"As far as the administration is concerned, we recognize that the opposition will always contradict and take a negative [stand]," he said, adding:

"The biggest challenge is not whether what the President presented is correct or not, but if we are capable of implementing it."

Optimism

Philippine Tourism Authority general manager Robert Dean Barbers said he was optimistic that the President would make good on her promise to boost tourism by developing major infrastructure projects.

Barbers said Ms Arroyo's promise was a clear indication of her desire for the Philippines to get a bigger share of the international tourism market in the next five years.

"I believe now is the time to steamroll infrastructure development programs to encourage economic growth coupled with sound political and social stability. [This will send] a clear signal to the international community that indeed the Philippines can be considered among the viable countries for major investments in Asia," Barbers told reporters.

"Most of the plans announced by the President are already in the works," he said. He cited, among other things, the construction of the international airport in Bohol, the improvements on the airport in Palawan, and the updating of the instrument landing system at the airport in Aklan. ***With reports from TJ Burgonio, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Jerome Aning and Christine O. Avendaño***

2nd batch of 225 OFWs arrives from Lebanon

From page A1

tion Airbus 310 at 10 p.m..

"A number of them are shell-shocked," said Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Gilberto Asuque.

A third group of OFWs—119 in all—is expected to arrive today at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport aboard a regular Qatar Airways flight.

In all, almost 1,000 OFWs are scheduled to come home this week on a government-chartered plane and on commercial flights.

"With the repatriation of this number from Beirut we would have drastically reduced the number of OFWs staying at our relocation site in Beirut," Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos Jr. told reporters yesterday.

Serving as a relocation center is the Church of the Miraculous Medal in Sassine, Beirut.

By the end of the week, a total of 726 Filipino workers would have returned home from Lebanon, counting the first 232 OFWs who planed in last Sunday, Conejos said.

Starting tomorrow until Friday, a total of 150 OFWs will be flown via regular commercial flights from Damascus to Manila.

Another 450 OFWs are scheduled to be repatriated from Aug. 1 to 9 with the assistance of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

"The (Philippine) Embassy in Beirut continues to process the evacuation of other Filipinos that wish to return home," Conejos said.

He said the DFA had been working closely with the labor department and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) to get them out of the embattled Middle East country.

Others staying behind

Special envoy Roy Cimatu and Ambassador Ricardo Endaya are now in southern Lebanon to ensure that all Filipinos there had left. The government had ordered a forced evacuation of Filipinos in that part of Lebanon.

Conejos said around 1,500 OFWs had gone to the embassy to register and indicate their willingness to be evacuated "at some future time."

In the meantime, they continued to stay with their employers.

Expenses for all the flights are shouldered by the government.

Conejos said that it was the "judgment call" of each OFW whether he or she wanted to return to the Philippines.

Not all of the estimated 34,000 OFWs in Lebanon were expected to want to come home.

Past wars

Conejos said that a survey conducted by his office among the first batch of repatriated OFWs indicated that at least 60 percent of those who chose to return had been working in Lebanon for only a year.

"Most of the OFWs who have worked there for a long time would most likely choose to remain there because they have experienced and seen the past wars in Lebanon," Conejos said.

The important thing is "to make the OFWs understand that the government has made available the option for them to return home," he said.

Some OFWs had expressed concern about the fate of their compatriots who were not allowed by their employers to leave.

The DFA explained that this could be because some employers wanted to make sure they turned over their employees to the proper authorities at this time of war.

Employers' responsibility

Asuque said this was because under Lebanese laws, an employer was always responsible for his employee.

"They just want to ensure that they won't be held liable after the war is over," Asuque said.

Conejos said the DFA would not yet recommend a travel ban to Israel.

Antonio Modena, ambassador to Tel Aviv, told the INQUIRER last Sunday that he had received reports that some Filipino workers bound for Israel were being prevented from leaving the Philippines purportedly because of a deployment ban.

"There's no deployment ban issued by the Philippine government," Modena said.

In a report to the DFA, Modena said the embassy in Tel Aviv wanted to assure the families of OFWs in Israel that "plans are in place and being implemented to ensure the safety of Filipinos" there.

Contingency plans are in place to ensure the OFWs' safety in northern Israel, and these include setting up temporary quarters for the Filipino workers.

There has been no Filipino casualty in the rocket attacks by Hezbollah militants on Haifa, Naharjya, Zefat, Kiryat Shmona, Tiberias, Nazareth and other northern Israeli towns and villages, Modena said.

However, Modena noted that an embassy team led by Vice Consul Thaddeus Hamoy had barely left Galilee when a Katyusha rocket hit the area a few days ago.

Bomb shelters

Hamoy's team had been checking on Filipinos in Tiberias, Tabgha and Kfar Nahum in Galilee.

Modena said there were no plans to relocate the Filipinos in Israel because they were safer staying with their employers whose homes had bomb shelters.

There are about 30,000 Filipinos in Israel. Most are in the capital Tel Aviv and the majority work as caregivers.

Filipinos working and living in the northern part of Israel, where the Hezbollah attacks are concentrated, were "advised to stay near bomb shelters as every home has one, where they may enter quickly once an attack alarm is sounded," Modena said.

The embassy has distributed advisories that contain instructions from the Israel Defense Forces on what to do in case of rocket attacks.

Modena said the embassy's text brigade, in place since 2004, "is on full alert."

He said that under the text brigade, "OFWs contact each other during incidents by cell phone. A cell number that fails to respond to a contact call is immediately investigated and the embassy notified so that it may act accordingly."

Miffed, JDV acts swiftly on 6 impeachment raps

From page A1

Remulla yesterday said the opposition would file "two more sets" of impeachment complaints.

According to Majority Leader Prospero Nograles, he expected the justice committee chaired by Maguindanao Rep. Simeon Datumanong to complete its hearings on the complaints and have a vote by the end of next month.

First week of August

Datumanong said the committee might hold its first hearing on the six complaints next week.

"The committee will act on it accordingly. Maybe we could have our first hearing in the first week of August," he said. "We have to read all of these complaints first before we take them on. Even the Supreme Court justices have to read entire petitions before discussing them."

Asked if the committee would accept more impeachment complaints now that the first six this year had been referred to it, Datumanong said: "I don't know. It depends on the Speaker. He's the one who decides before complaints are referred to us. Once they are transmitted, then we take them on."

Per a ruling by the Supreme Court, once an impeachment complaint has been initiated, "another impeachment complaint may not be filed against the same officials within a one-year period."

'Prohibited complaints'

"Initiation takes place by the act of filing and referral of endorsement of the impeachment complaint to the House committee on justice," the high court said.

This was the ruling invoked on Monday by Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman when he said the six impeachment complaints were "prohibited complaints" because they were filed within the one-year ban against the filing of new complaints against the President.

Lagman is the author of the "prejudicial questions" that became instrumental in the dismissal of the impeachment case against Ms Arroyo last year.

According to Lagman, the ban will only end today because the impeachment complaint filed against Ms Arroyo last year was referred to the justice committee "on July 26, 2005, at 4:20 p.m."

"The initiation of an impeachment complaint entails a process which commences with the filing of the complaint and culminates in the receipt of the complaint by the committee on justice to which it is referred," Lagman said.

2 more

"[Therefore,] the 'new' complaints are perforce mere scraps of paper which are destitute of legal import although abundant in partisan propaganda," he said.

But Remulla said the opposition would still file more complaints against the President today and tomorrow.

"There are two more sets, I think. The JDV Express wants to prevent even the possibility of a snowball effect of the successive filing of complaints," Remulla said.

"It is to the best interest of the administration to get this over with, and fast," he said.

Have you seen her?

MARQUEZ

MARINA LANUZA MARQUEZ, 71, OF 3427 Guernica St. Palanan, Makati City, has been missing for more than a week now. She was last seen on her way to the Palanan church on July 18 wearing blue jeans and a white shirt with the print "DUMAGUETE." She had a small black shoulder bag and a green umbrella. She is about five feet tall and 110 lbs. Any information about her whereabouts may be relayed to Rene Marquez or Elgin Manlangit at Tel. Nos. 758-3268 and 728-1338 and cellphone Nos. 0917-2515351; 0917-2447302; 0922-8065522; or 0917-5274329.

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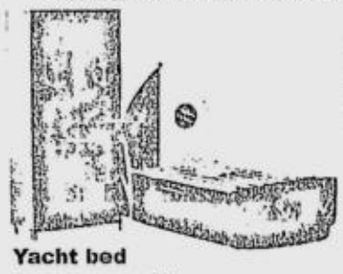

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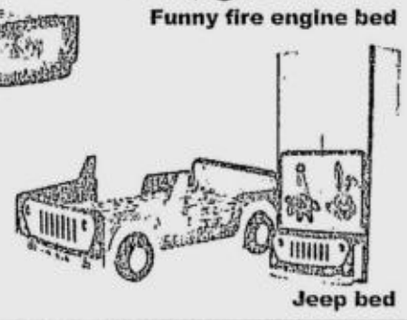

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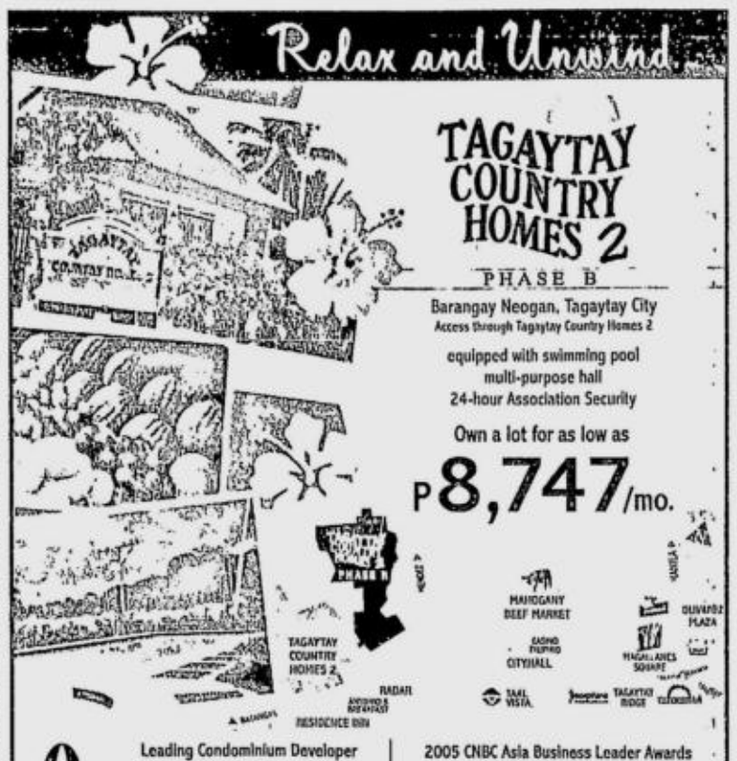

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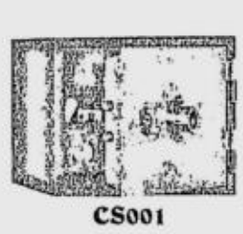

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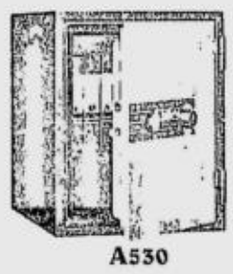

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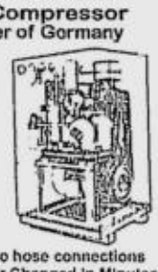

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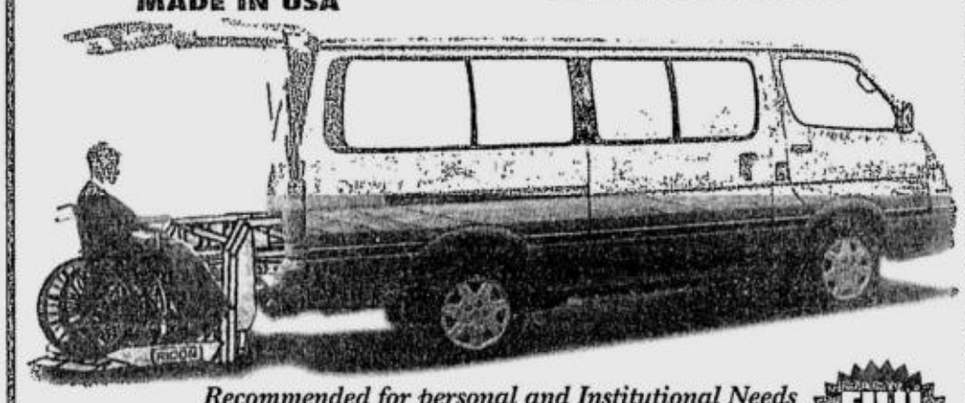

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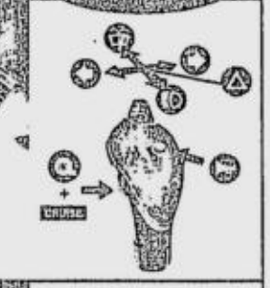

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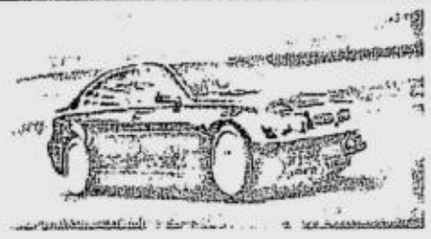

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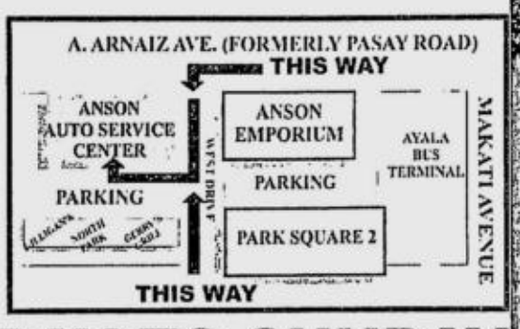

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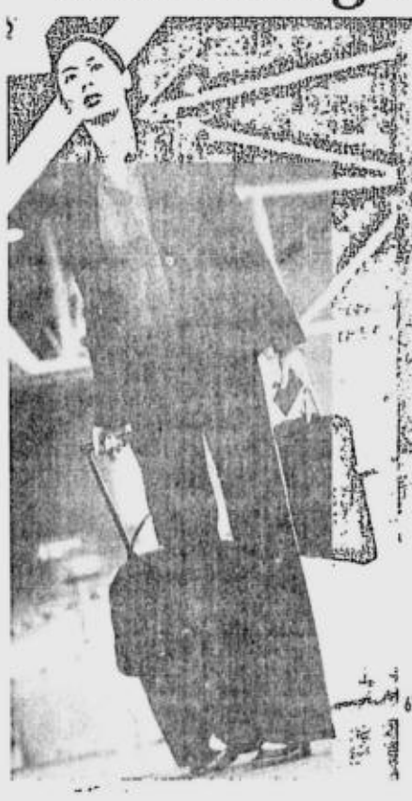

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'Nicole' too drunk to give her consent, says toxicologist

By Volt Contreras
and Tarra V. Quismundo

ONE OF THE FOUR US MARINES charged in the Subic rape case submitted yesterday to a court order to have his blood sample taken for DNA comparison, a procedure earlier sought by the lawyers of Filipino complainant "Nicole."

Also yesterday, a toxicologist presented by the prosecution as an expert witness said the amount of alcohol Nicole claimed to have imbibed shortly before the alleged rape was enough to render her too drunk to "defend herself" or "sense impending danger."

"[In] my opinion, a person would not be able to give her consent [to sex] at that level," Dr. Kenneth Go of the Philippine General Hospital replied when asked during direct examination how Nicole's alcohol intake at Subic's Neptune Club on the night of Nov. 1, 2005, might have affected her "capacity to resist a sexual attack."

Before Go's cross-examination could begin, Makati Judge Benjamin Pozon announced that Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith's blood extraction could proceed.

Pozon issued a ruling earlier in the day granting the prosecution's motion to have the soldier's DNA examined. Later in open court, he denied the oral motion for reconsideration of Smith's lawyer Benjamin Formoso.

Two female officers of the Philippine National Police Crime Laboratory administered the 10-minute procedure on Smith inside the courtroom.

The Marine was moved from his usual seat in the gallery to a nearby table for the extraction.

The prosecution wants Smith's DNA to be compared with the "male DNA profile" that, an expert witness from the PNP Crime Lab said last week, was found on the panties worn by Nicole on the night of the alleged rape.

Months before the landmark trial began in June, Smith admitted to having sex with Nicole but claimed it was consensual.

Formoso yesterday told Pozon he would elevate to the Court of Appeals his objection to the DNA test conducted on his client.

The judge acknowledged that Formoso could indeed go to the CA, but said the test would still proceed in his court.

Go said the alcohol level in Nicole's system was sufficient to cause "severe impairment of [her] cognitive ability [and] impairment of judgment."

She would have difficulty "perceiving things, remembering things, controlling movement," the doctor added during questioning by private prosecutor Evalyn Ursua.

Asked if Nicole would have been able, for example, to board a vehicle, Go said "no way" would a person in such a state be able to do that "by herself."

Unable to resist

She may "not be able to resist, or move voluntarily. She cannot sense impending danger or defend herself in response to that stimuli," he said when asked by Ursua how alcohol would have affected Nicole's capacity to defend herself against violence.

Go also said Nicole's failure to remember some incidents, especially those which other prosecution witnesses earlier testified to, was "consistent" with the expected effects of alcohol on a person's memory.

"Fragmentary amnesia may happen while drinking or upon cessation of drinking," he said.

He also said "alcoholic blackouts" could happen to frequent or first-time drinkers.

But on cross-examination by defense lawyer Jose Justiniano, Go admitted that his studies on the alcohol content of Nicole's drinks did not consider the fact that some of the cocktails had ice in them.

"Yes, from a chemical perspective, water can dilute chemicals," Go said.

The doctor tried to qualify his answer but was stopped by Justiniano, who said Go would have a chance to do that during redirect examination.

Intoxication

Go said he and six fellow toxicologists at the PGH arrived at a medical opinion after a study of Nicole's possible intoxication level.

He said the complainant had 445.2 mg/dL (milligrams per deciliter) of alcohol in her blood.

Asked to define intoxication, Go gave both a scientific and a legal explanation:

"Intoxication is a spectrum. From a clinical perspective, you could be intoxicated with a small amount of alcohol, depending on how your body absorbs alcohol.

"We don't have a legal definition of intoxication here but in [the United States], an 80 to 100 mg/dL of blood alcohol level is considered intoxication. More than 100 is considered severe intoxication."

Go said the computation of Nicole's intoxication level was based on witness accounts of her physical state and behavior at the Neptune and the drinks she had prior to the alleged rape. Several witnesses, Nicole included, had testified that she consumed two glasses of Vodka Sprite, a shot each of B52 and B53, a glass of Singapore Sling, half a glass of Long Island Iced Tea, and half a pitcher of Bullfrog.

Scientific formula

Go said he used a scientific formula that considered several factors, including the amount of alcohol in a given drink and the drinker's ability to diffuse the alcohol depending on her metabolic rate and body weight.

The computation was cumulative, as Nicole's blood alcohol level after one drink was factored in during the calculation of her intoxication level upon the next drink.

SKETCH by INQUIRER artist Steph Bravo shows a PNP medical team extracting a blood sample from accused Daniel Smith for DNA testing.

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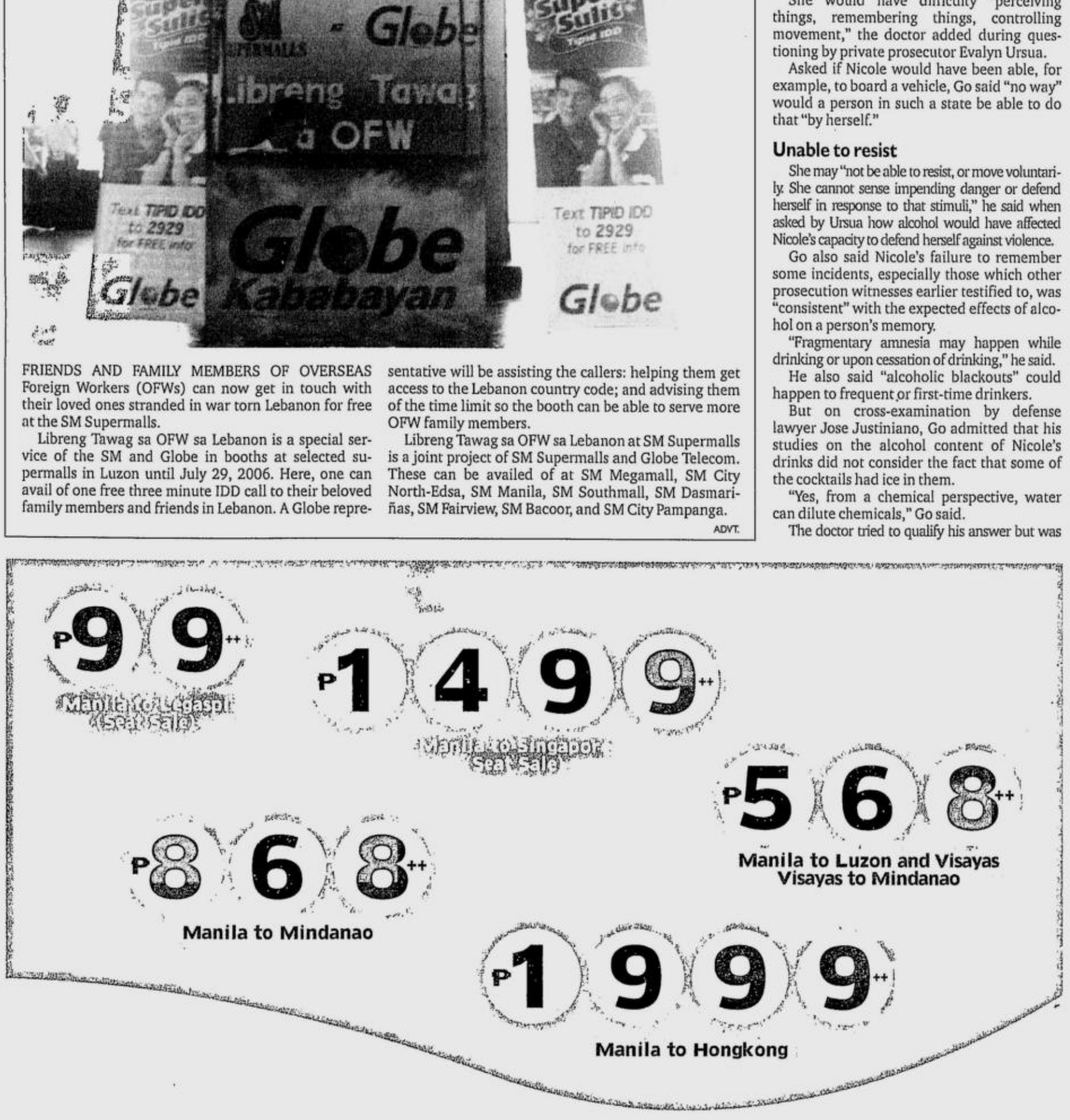

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Religious orders pledge 'critical collaboration'

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE COUNTRY'S MALE RELIGIOUS CONGREgations have agreed to engage in a "critical collaboration" with the Arroyo administration, if only to address the "real state of the nation," particularly the problem of poverty.

In the eyes of the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP), the real state of the nation can be gleaned in the poverty, corruption, killings, environmental destruction and selfish political interests plaguing the country.

The male section of the AMRSP is made up of the Jesuits, Dominicans, Lasallians, Marists, Alexians, Salesians, Vincentians, Redemptorists, Claretians, Columbans, Rogationists, Augustinians, Benedictines and Franciscans.

They painted this grim scenario days before President Macapagal-Arroyo delivered her State of the Nation Address on Monday.

"We have spent time reflecting on the condition of the people that we serve and we are compelled to address the following concerns that plague our society today," the group said in a statement following their convention in Cebu last week.

The congregations, numbering 103, noted the "mounting number of extrajudicial killings, the ill effects of mining and its control by foreign corporations, the railroading of the Charter change process, rampant corruption in both public and private sectors, and the immediate and dire consequences of poverty throughout the country."

They agreed to engage in a "critical collaboration" with the administration to help address the concerns they had outlined.

It was a tack adopted by the late Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin in dealing with the dictator Ferdinand Marcos during the martial law years.

"The easiest thing to do is to bury ourselves in the work of our own provinces and not mind one bit what is happening around us. It is a temptation that is easy to succumb to," said Br. Edmund Fernandez FSC, of the La Salle Brothers and AMRSP cochair, in a speech.

17 Scout Rangers linked to coup plot sent to Tanay

From page A1

to identify the 17 officers, beyond saying that they held ranks ranging from lieutenant to captain.

This brought to 19 the number of Scout Ranger officers already in Camp Capinpin, the headquarters of the Army's 2nd Infantry Division.

Last July 11, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, the dismissed Scout Rangers commandant, and Maj. Jason Aquino, the regiment's operations chief, were transferred to the Tanay facility.

The military says Lim and Marine Col. Ariel Querubin were the principal instigators of the plot to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo through a military withdrawal of support.

After the Feb. 24 plot was foiled, Lim was dismissed and restricted to quarters at the Fort Bonifacio Army headquarters before being transferred to Tanay.

Upon the discovery of the plot, a number of FSRR officers were dismissed and restricted to quarters in various Army camps outside Metro Manila, including the regiment's Camp Tecson base in San Miguel, Bulacan.

Believed to be among the 17 officers transferred to the Tanay facility yesterday was Capt. Ruben Guinolbay, hailed as the "hero of Lamitan," who was personnel chief of the FSRR.

Guinolbay gained prominence as the leader of an Army squad that fought the Abu Sayyaf bandit group during the botched siege in Lamitan, Basilan, in June 2001. Guinolbay and his troops fought the Abu Sayyaf bandits who still managed to escape even after being cornered in a hospital-church compound in Lamitan.

The bandits' escape prompted congressional investigations into an alleged collusion between military officials and the Abu Sayyaf.

Guinolbay won a Gold Cross Medal, the military's third highest honor, in another encounter with the Abu Sayyaf later that year.

Torres said the 17 officers were first brought to Fort Bonifacio yesterday morning before being taken to Camp Capinpin.

He said the 17 should have been transferred on July 12, a day after Lim's transfer, based on a commitment order issued by Armed Forces Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, the then Army chief.

Torres said the transfer was delayed because "we had to consolidate them first in Fort Bonifacio."

"If they will be asked to come to court, they will be made available," he added.

Lim, through his wife and lawyer, has asked the Court of Appeals to order his release from detention, claiming that no charges have been filed against him. He also complained that his detention quarters did not have water and electricity.

Ousted President Joseph Estrada was initially detained at the Camp Capinpin facility before the Sandiganbayan antigraft court that is trying him for plunder allowed him an unprecedented "house arrest" at his lavish vacation villa just across the road from the military camp in 2003.

Reporters who have joined court inspections of the detention facility observed that the bungalow could not possibly hold 26 grown men.

The bungalow used to have two rooms on the ground floor and a room in the basement before it underwent extensive renovation recently to make it secure enough to hold the alleged coup plotters.

A total of 25 FSRR officers led by Lim face court-martial and summary dismissal proceedings before the Army Efficiency and Separation Board (ESB) for the February coup plot.

An additional 125 FSRR enlisted personnel linked to the plot also face summary dismissal proceedings.

At the same time, 15 officers from the Marines also face court-martial for their participation in the coup.

On Monday, Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Nelson Allaga announced that 12 of the officers led by Querubin had been relieved of their posts and would be tried before the Navy Efficiency and Separation Board.

Vice Admiral Mateo Mayuga, the Navy flag officer in command, gave the order after two Marine colonels were reported to have resigned from key posts in the Marine Corps ahead of the investigation.

Former Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda, who was sacked last Feb. 26 for his alleged involvement in the coup plot, however was spared from the ESB trial.

Unlike their Army counterparts, the 12 Marine officers are not in detention but are under the custody of Mayuga, with certain restrictions to their movements.

Meanwhile, Miranda's aide de camp is set to submit her affidavit to National Bureau of Investigation officials to shed light on the February coup attempt.

1st Lt. Belinda Ferrer, who worked as a confidential assistant to Miranda, showed up at the NBI yesterday after she received a subpoena to explain what happened during the Feb. 26 stand-off at Fort Bonifacio.

"Ferrer was present during the meeting at Marine headquarters on Feb. 24. She could provide us with information vital to our investigation into the plot," Arnel Dalumpines, the NBI Special Task Force executive officer, told reporters.

Dalumpines said Ferrer was responsible for screening Miranda's visitors, and served sandwiches and other refreshments during meetings.

"We are hopeful that she will identify the other personalities who may have been present at those gatherings," he said.

Ferrer was hostile toward the media when she arrived at the bureau before noon yesterday, raising her voice at the cameramen while covering her face and refusing to make a statement.

According to a draft report of the Lopez fact-finding panel that investigated the February coup plot, Miranda tried to convince Marine Col. Jonathan Martir to join the officers planning a protest march to Edsa on Feb. 24.

The report said Martir had described the march as "illegal" and an act of "mutiny" and refused to cooperate with Miranda. *With a report from Margaux Ortiz*

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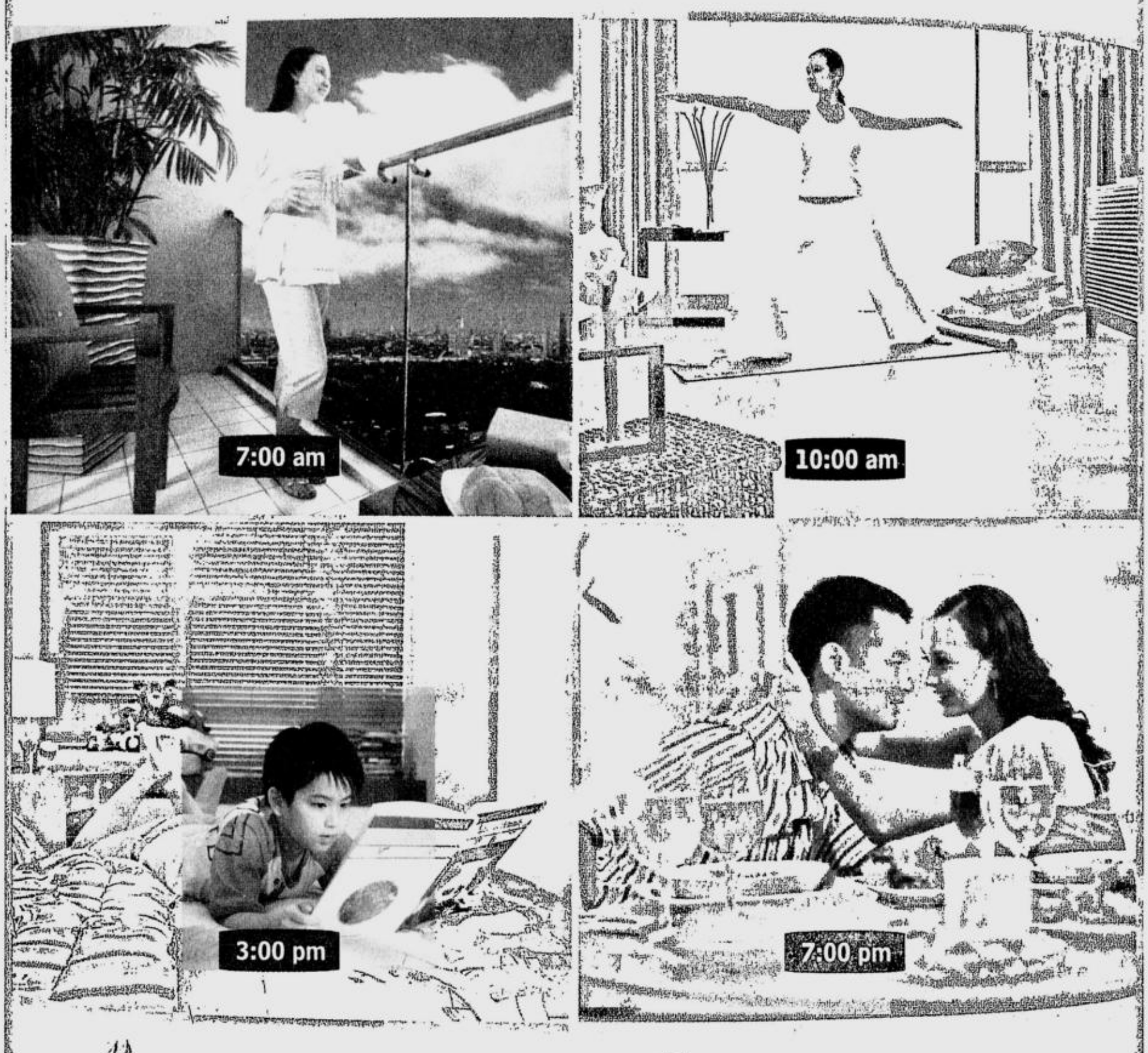

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OPINION

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Slap and tickle

FROM CHARTER CHANGE ADVOCATES STRATEGICally located at the left side of the Batasan Session Hall to the sprinkling of what one TV reporter called "human props," the sixth State of the Nation Address of President Macapagal-Arroyo was choreographed to achieve a maximum of enthusiasm. The well-planned simulation of spontaneous frenzy, however, lasted just a little longer than the speech itself.

EDITORIAL

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, perhaps not adequately briefed by the Palace communications team, blurted out that the question of funding is still pending. He could only go as far as listing the potential sources of funds: revenues, loans or private investments, adding that they would still have to study the financial requirements of the various projects the President had enumerated. Teves said he, together with Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. and Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, would sort things out over the next couple of weeks. Albay Rep. Joey Salceda was quicker on the uptake, saying confidently that given a three-year period, the government can generate enough revenues to fund all the public works projects the President mentioned.

Such uncharacteristic caution on the part of the President's official family can only be glossed over by the enthusiasm of allies such as Salceda. While the President undeniably gave the best Sona of her presidency (in terms of the confidence she displayed, and the rip-roaring style she used), it was also perhaps unprecedented in its internal contradictions.

Aside from an extremely detailed, geographically exhaustive list of projects, her speech was silent both on the failure of Congress to pass many of her budgets in the past, or whether her 2007 budget could be funded while maintaining the fiscal gains she hailed. Even as she declared that the country was spending more prudently and paying off its debt, Teves had to point out that borrowing will continue to be part of government policy (though he expects better rates of interest).

The President praised advances in fighting corruption, including a diminishing incidence of bribery of government officials by the private sector. That is indeed to the credit of local government leaders and their constituents, but it is not to her credit. For even as she vowed to fight corruption, the names of a host of her allies, ranging from former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez and former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante to Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, immediately came to the public's mind, like ghosts that won't be exorcised. And her administration has not taken an exorcist's role in going after those suspects.

The President's announcement that she was going to shun politics was followed by an old-fashioned campaign speech. The event became a *miting de avance,* where the only thing missing was her multitude of congressional allies going up to the podium so she could raise their arms. It became a rhetorical salvo in support of Charter change, though she was firm in qualifying what to many is its most attractive aspect—federalism—as something that will happen in the future, something that is "eventual."

Her sound bite that she unequivocably condemned extrajudicial killings, which was intended to be heard around the world, was accompanied by another series of sound bites that only served to shoot the first one down. She hailed Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan as a hero and asked him to take a bow. With that bow, any hope that witnesses would surface to help solve the extrajudicial killings can be said to have died. And yesterday, the Philippine National Police buried the corpse of the President's rhetoric against "salvaging" with an announcement exonerating Palparan.

It's undeniable that the President is most persuasive when she displays her great capacity for understanding geography, and for retaining facts and figures. She played up those strengths magnificently. The presidential imagination obviously thrives when discussing the placement of ports and the interconnectivity of railway systems. Her political instincts flourish when tackling the minutiae of farming out public works and ensuring everyone has a place around the trough.

And so the country saw the Republic as she and her allies see it: something to be carved up and parceled out. And yet, for a country that has always been romantic, there wasn't much of a dream on display—only political logistics. There was plenty to tickle her supporters, and slaps for the skeptics.

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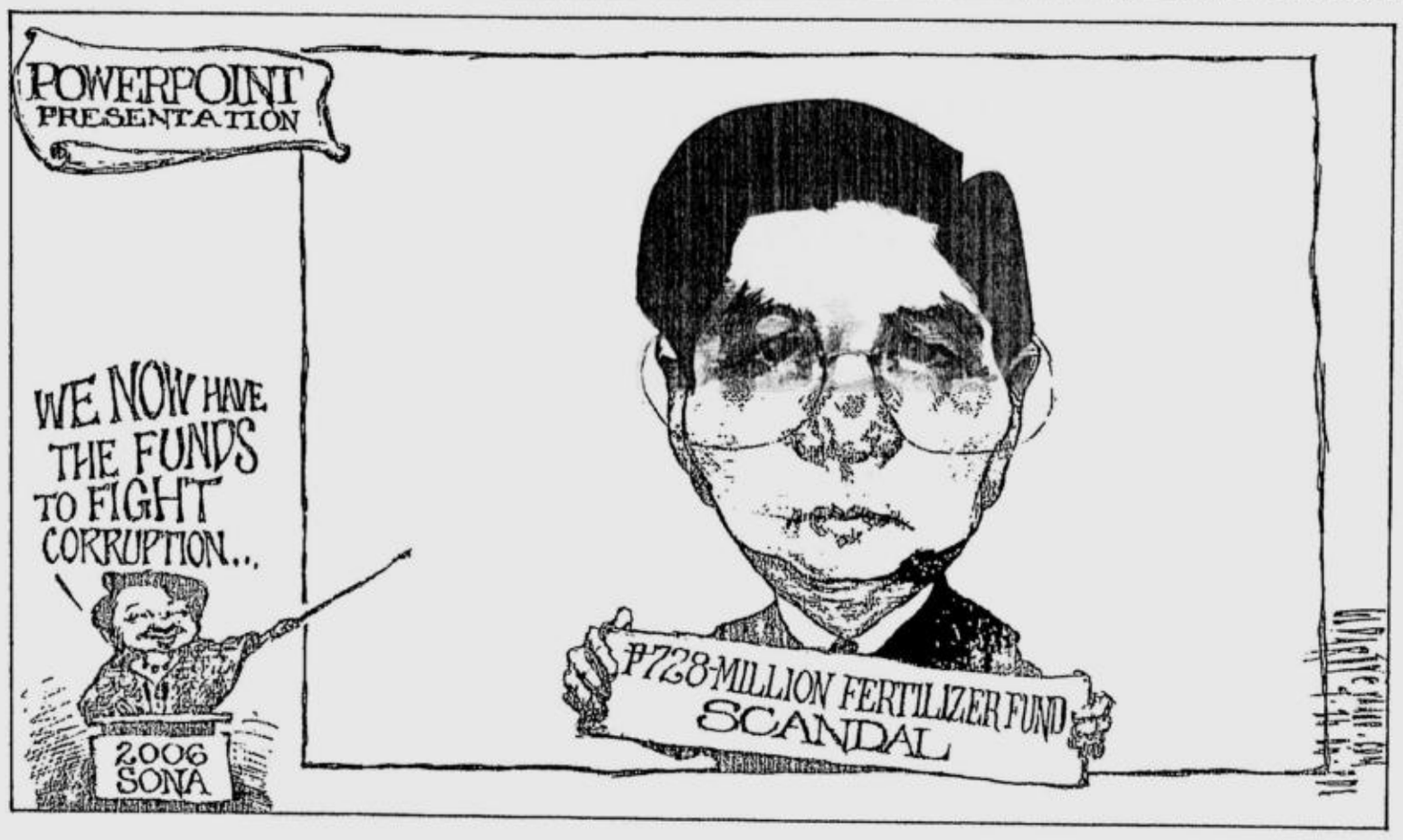

That was not a Sona but a wish list

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THAT WAS NOT A STATE OF THE NATION Address (Sona) that President Macapagal-Arroyo delivered, that was a wish list. In a Sona, the President is supposed to report to Congress and the people how she ran the country in the past year. She did no such thing. Instead she delivered a campaign speech. She ticked off what infrastructure projects she plans to build: highways, seaports, airports, railways, nautical highways, mega-regions. It was like she was singing about a new Camelot.

Perhaps she had nothing good to report, and so she chose not to make any and instead said what her listeners wanted to hear: projects, just in time for next year's election campaign. No wonder the congressmen, local government officials and other government factotums were applauding like mad. Each project, after all, means commissions from cooperative contractors.

The projects are so plentiful and massive it seemed like it was a desert kingdom floating in oil making all the grand plans. Perhaps it was the effect of GMA's visits to Saudi Arabia and Libya. But what may be real for these oil kingdoms are just dreams for a poor country like the Philippines. I predict that not even a fourth of these projects would be completed during GMA's term, even assuming that she would finish her term until 2010, which is a long shot.

But there is nothing wrong with dreaming or wishing. Except that you have to wake up sooner or later and face reality.

As GMA ticked off her wish list, I was reminded of Pinocchio—before his nose grew too long from telling too many lies—singing "When you wish upon a star." But I was not watching a movie or a fantasy story but a reality show.

GMA boasts that she has an excess of P2 billion because of the increase in taxes. That's not even enough to construct enough classrooms for all the public school students. Where will she get the rest of the money, from more taxes? Heaven forbid!

Besides, if she uses the money for the projects, where would she get the money to bribe congressmen to block the impeachment complaints against her?

* * *

Speaking of bribes, in boasting that she has reduced the rate of corruption, GMA admitted that 48 percent of businesses in Metro Manila bribe public officials in order to do business. The rate is only slightly smaller in other cities. Imagine, almost half of all businesses in the Philippines have to use bribery to be able to operate! Public officials should hang their heads in shame, or, better still, have their heads chopped off. The head of such a country should resign.

* * *

I want to balance this piece by saying something good about the state of the nation. And that is the revelation that the squatters along the SouthRail have been relocated to their new homes. Giving credit where credit is due, credit for that should go to Vice President Noli de Castro. Why can't the President do the same thing in other parts of Metro Manila?

* * *

Here's an amusing piece of trivia: While GMA was delivering her Sona, the heavens were crying buckets of water (sparing the firemen the need to use their firehouses against protesters picketing the President), courtesy of the typhoon whose name is "Gloria." Its international name is Typhoon Emi, but it was renamed Typhoon Gloria when it entered the Philippines' area of responsibility. Pagasa immediately changed the name to Typhoon Glenda when it found out that it would hit Luzon on the very same day that its namesake would deliver her Sona.

* * *

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and former Sen. Francisco Tatad had their own Sonas at the Kapihan sa Manila and stayed away from the Batasan.

"Why should people listen to fairy tales?" Pimentel asked. "Their growling stomachs already tell them the true state of the nation."

Pimentel noted that the President and her retinue spend hundreds of millions of pesos every time they travel (which is very often), but the Philippine government claims not to have enough funds to evacuate the Filipino workers in Lebanon. While other governments are sending ships, planes and buses to evacuate their citizens, the Philippines can only tell its own citizens to go to a church and pray or else hitch rides in foreign carriers. These are the OFWs whose earnings that they send home keep the Philippine economy afloat and whom GMA calls "heroes." Now they are in danger and need help from their government and all it can tell them is, "Pack up and go!"

Go where? How?

Pimentel noted that there is an Owwa fund, contributed by the workers themselves, for just such an emergency. "What happened to that fund?" he asked.

* * *

For his part, Tatad said, "Mrs. Arroyo has nothing more to say to us Filipinos. She has told us all the lies an individual could possibly tell others in a single lifetime."

Everything about her is now a lie, he continued. "Her continued occupation of the presidency is a lie, her claim of trying to address the problems of poverty, of the rule of law and justice of which she is a primary cause, is a lie."

"The only thing Mrs. Arroyo can truthfully say today is that in the last five years she has ruled the country without a legitimate mandate and without popular support except from her allies ... and that she will stay on regardless of any constitutional infirmity or lack of popular acceptability, if it means crushing every form of dissent to her continued exercise of power without legitimate authority. What was once a democracy is now the imperial rule of a corrupt, unwanted and unaccountable minority."

Pack up and go

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IT WAS A PLAINTIVE CRY FROM THE BOWels of a desperate land and the pit of a desperate heart. "Where have all the OFWs' billions in remittances gone?" That was the cry that issued from the mouth of Fr. Agustin Advincula, who runs the Church of the Miraculous Medal in Beirut, where thousands of tired, frightened and desperate Filipino domestic helpers in Lebanon have sought shelter from Israeli bombs.

It struck a painful contrast, the way other countries were sending ships and other modes of (quick) transport to pluck their nationals out of harm's way and the way the Philippine government was telling its overseas workers to "hitch a ride" to save themselves. The image that flashed in my mind with that advice was the kind of public transport in our provinces in the south, called *habal-habal,* that ferries as much as a dozen people. The contraption is just a motorcycle that has a couple of wooden boards strapped behind the driver where passengers sit on both sides, balancing themselves. Sometimes it takes in more than a dozen passengers, the desperate finding miniscule spaces left in the thing to plant foot or toe on to it. It's the perfect image of the Filipino's plight, the balancing act he has to do to survive. Unfortunately there are no *habal-habal* in Lebanon.

Later the person-occupying-Malacañang-who-likes-to-call-herself-president would tell the OFWs to "just pack up and go." Nobody seems to have told her that unlike the folk at the foot of Mayon, no one is waiting to see if a bomb would fall nearby before they leave. Certainly, no one is waiting for their employers to give them their wages first before they leave; many have been abandoned by their employers right at their doorstep, *bahala ka na sa buhay mo,* each (wo)man to (her)himself. All of them would like nothing better than to go, never mind pack up.

Question is: How?

Which brings us back to Father Advincula's plaintive and thundering question: Where have all the OFW millions gone? Advincula wasn't being accusatory when he asked that, as the reports clarified, but his question itself remains a finger pointing at the crooks in furious indictment.

There are many answers to that question, but one of them is the transfer of Owwa funds to PhilHealth some years ago. The mandate of the Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration, as its name suggests, is to give welfare assistance to OFWs and their families. But on Nov. 24, 2002, PhilHealth president Francisco Duque proposed another use for its funds. He wrote a memo to GMA saying that the diversion of Owwa Medicare funds to PhilHealth would bear significantly on the 2004 elections. GMA believed him and issued Executive Order 182 transferring the Medicare Funds of the Medical Functions of Owwa amounting to P530,382,446 to PhilHealth Insurance Corp. The transfer was approved by the labor department, with the exception of Corazon P. Carsola, whom the OFWs may truly thank even if she fought for a lost cause. She refused to sign, objecting to the use of medical funds badly needed by the OFWs for patent electoral purposes. The very design of the new PhilHealth card proclaimed it to be so: It metamorphosed from a simple one bearing the picture of the beneficiary to one showing GMA cradling an infant. The infant was not its beneficiary.

Subsequently, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas declared that OFWs who had incurred medical expenses would no longer be reimbursed by Owwa.

The ironic note here is that GMA did not win even with that ploy. She still needed to call up Garci no less than 15 times to do so—if one may call the result winning.

Where did the OFW millions go? That was one of its destinations. The others, well, as Franklin Drilon, a former labor secretary points out, the Owwa has cash reserves amounting to a mind-boggling P7.6 billion. Why GMA should choose to allocate only P150 million to rescue the Filipinos in Lebanon from dire straits, only she can say. It is so much less than the amount she took from the Owwa, funds meant to keep OFWs alive and healthy, just so she could remain politically alive, never mind healthy, or indeed just so she could rescue herself from her desperate plight. Which didn't work anyway; she still needed the seaunworthy vessel MV Garci to get her out of her Hezbollah.

The nationals of other countries who were promptly evacuated by their governments were not the lifeblood of their country. They were people whose jobs, bureaucratic or civilian, had simply brought them there. Yet, if you saw the footage in BBC and CNN, there they were at the docks, filing out without hurry, children and elderly in tow, some with pretty heavy luggage, climbing up the stairs in waiting ships. This was no Dunkirk. Their governments were giving them this service for no other reason than that they were citizens, their governments owed it to them for being so.

By contrast, the Filipinos who could not be evacuated by their government, who were being told to hitch a ride by the Department of Foreign Affairs and just pack up and go by the person-occupying-Malacañang-who-likes-to-call-herself-president were the lifeblood of their country. They were the maids, drivers and canal diggers whose blood, sweat and tears were keeping their country alive and its crooks fat. Their government was scrimping on them for a reason other than that they were cannon fodder. There was more of them back home eager to brave war, famine and natural and human disasters for a crack at living. A crack at living by dying, the ultimate balancing act.

Just pack up and go? It's very good advice, but wrong adviser and wrong advicee. GMA shouldn't be telling that to the Filipinos in Lebanon. The Filipinos in Lebanon should be telling that to her.

Women empowered

COMMENTARY

Rosary Diane B. Maligalig
Institute on Church and Social Issues

AS A WOMAN, I HAVE MANY ROLES IN MY LIFE —daughter, friend, colleague, employee, writer, the list goes on and on. Sometimes I ask myself if I have been able to perform my roles successfully and if I have been empowered in performing these roles. During a fertility awareness seminar I attended recently with my colleagues, it dawned on me that empowerment is being able to make choices in the personal, educational or professional aspects of my life.

Due to the many women who have made their choices and have become working mothers, drivers, government officials, journalists, social development workers, engineers, police officers, women's role in our society has evolved. Gone are the days when women were left at home to become housewives and babysitters. Nowadays, we see more and more women even taking on roles previously perceived to be for men only.

Jenny Luces-Acosta has been a tricycle driver for five years. She used to work in a factory, but when her contract ended she decided to take things into her own hands and started driving a tricycle part-time. As in any male dominated profession, it wasn't easy for her at first. Male tricycle drivers were not accustomed to having somebody like her around. "*Sa simula tinitingnan at pinagtatawanan ako. Pero dahil* sport *ako, ngayon sanay na sila* (When I started, everybody was looking and laughing at me. But I took it all in stride, and they have become used to me now)," she said.

A single mother who was driving even when she was pregnant, Jenny says she would do everything for her child. "*Trabaho ng lalaki nakayanan ko. Tiyaga ang kailangan sa hirap ng buhay ngayon para may kita kahit paano para sa gatas ng* baby (A man's job I was able to do. Perseverance is needed because life is difficult nowadays; I need to earn so that I can buy milk for my baby)."

A woman community leader, Rosario Dadulo is serving her first term as barangay captain of Payatas B after being a *kagawad* for one term. She said it was her constituents and her husband who encouraged her to run and that it was perhaps her mission in life. "I was lucky enough to make it. Perhaps it's God's mission for me," she said.

The work was not easy at first. She said: "The work to be done was challenging. We started from scratch. There were disconnection notices (in the barangay hall) and lots of problems. I was challenged to transform our community. I convened our council and started serving."

She believes that improvement in the communities begins with one's own family. That is why there are livelihood courses and programs offered in their community for mothers and fathers. "More women attend livelihood programs and they are empowered because they have fewer quarrels with their spouses since they are already able to contribute to their family's economic development," she said.

Fondly called "Kap" by her constituents, Dadulo urges women who are hiding in the shadows to be empowered. "Those (women) who are not yet awake and still scared to come out should be the ones we should empower more."

Another woman in a man's world is Police Officer Tejanne Zarzoso. "TJ" has been a policewoman for 10 years. It was her own choice to enter the profession. "Opportunity came and I chose to become one (a policewoman)," she said.

She said the enactment of RA 8551, the Philippine National Police Reform and Reorganization Act of 1998, helped the police in addressing problems of women and children. The law mandates that women make up 10 percent of the entire police force.

One of these problems, TJ said, is the lack of gender sensitivity especially with respect to women and children in conflict with the law. One example of this is the lack of separate jail cells in police stations to hold them. "I was able to lobby, and fortunately, the local government of Cabadbaran, Agusan del Norte, approved and constructed a separate detention cell for women and children," she said.

For TJ, there is one role she considers most important: that of being a mother. "Child-rearing is very challenging and tedious," she said, "yet the satisfaction we get from it is beyond expression. I consider myself accountable for how my children will turn out to be and the roles they will play later in life."

I admire these women who have made their choices—to support and nurture a family, to lead a community and to enforce the law—and have lived by them. How well they have played their roles are empowering examples for other women to follow.

At times when I feel like giving up on the various roles I have to play and the various choices and decisions I have to make, I feel inspired again when I remember stories like these—stories of women who have fought against all odds and are still struggling every single day. It may not be easy, but empowerment starts with knowing that one can do things, no matter how hard they might be.

The 'golden goose' at risk

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IN SUPPORT OF "NICOLE," THE YOUNG WOMAN who has filed a case of rape against four US servicemen and who prefers to be known by this name, The Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service (TOWNS) is launching a "Justice for Nicole" fund drive through a special performance of "La Bayadere" by Ballet Manila, starring prima ballerina Lisa Macuja-Elizalde.

"La Bayadere" premieres on Aug. 11 at 6 p.m. at the Aliw Theater at Star City in the CCP Complex.

"This is not just for Nicole, we are fighting for the dignity of our fellow Filipinas and for our nation's pride," former Sen. Letty Shahani, TOWNS member and author of the anti-rape bill, said.

TOWNS said that although the family is not indigent, the cost of litigation is draining the family's finances. Family members have to travel from Zamboanga to Manila to give her support. One brother has even stopped schooling.

"Just the daily transcript costs P2,000, or P8,000 a week. In the last hearing, they could not get the transcript anymore because they owed the clerk P12,000 already, hence, TOWNS is raising a 'Justice for Nicole' fund," the group said in a press release.

Responding to the call to raise funds, Macuja-Elizalde, a TOWNS awardee, generously offered to give TOWNS orchestra tickets at P500 each to the opening of the ballet season where she will be dancing opposite the foremost Russian Marinsky principal dancer, Maxim Chaschegorov.

After the performance, the ticket can be exchanged for a P200 "ride-all-you-can" bracelet at the Star City (just beside the Aliw Theater).

Tickets to the fund raiser of "La Bayadere" are available from any TOWNS awardee, Museo Pambata and Kaisa Heritage Center, 32 Anda cor. Cabildo Sts., Intramuros. For inquiries, call Tel. Nos. 637-4260, 637-4259, 526-6796, or 527-6083. A group of student volunteers helping with the media coverage of the Subic rape case has also created a blog, and it can be accessed at subicrapecase.wordpress.com. Check it out for trial updates, commentaries and background documents.

* * *

QUESTIONS raised about the integrity of the recent Nursing Board Exams have imperiled not just the careers of the "successful" examinees or the reputations of their schools, but also the entire country's status as a source of qualified health personnel, especially nurses.

A report by Edmund Silvestre, news editor of New York-based newspaper The Filipino Reporter, revealed that the US-based National Council for State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) has postponed making a decision on whether to make the Philippines a NCLEX test center pending the results of an ongoing probe on the alleged nursing board exam leakage in Baguio City.

NCSBN president Donna Dorsey told Silvestre that the matter had been up for decision in the board's meeting last July 12-14, but the board agreed to "monitor how the situation is going to be handled in the Philippines before we make our final decision."

The NCLEX is a test required of any nurse who wishes to work in the United States. If the Philippines becomes an NCLEX test center, it would spare many from unnecessary expense, since they could take the test here before making plans to emigrate, and it would also improve their chances of getting hired.

* * *

"THE BOARD decided to monitor how the situation is going to be handled in the Philippines before we make our final decision," Dorsey told Silvestre. "We got everything we needed to make a decision, including the last information that we needed regarding the intellectual property law and its enforcement in the Philippines," Dorsey said. "But we feel that with the cheating scandal, if we bring NCLEX to the Philippines, it would appear that we're putting the exam at risk." She added that "if we see the Philippines is serious about preventing (the leakage) from happening again, then that will be all good."

Dorsey was reported as having visited the Philippines in March and later giving glowing reports about the country. She however ends her four-year term as president in the first week of August.

Philippine Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) Chair Leonor Tripon-Lucero confirmed there were leakages of test questions and answers that circulated among students of a review center during the exams in Baguio. A PRC fact-finding body traced the leak to the test manuscripts of two members of the PRC board of nursing.

Ninety-one examinees complained to the PRC about the cheating, and had asked for the suspension of both the test results and the two members of the nursing board. Members of the Philippine Nurses Association in Baguio and the Association of Deans of Philippine Colleges of Nursing (ADPCN) also filed their complaints.

* * *

THE BOARD exam leakage is but the latest scandal to erupt around nursing licensing and education. Some months ago, senior officials of the Commission on Higher Education resigned their posts in protest of alleged interference in their work. There had been reports that "influential" owners of nursing schools, which have mushroomed around the country, were using their political muscle to get the CHED to back off from enforcing the appropriate standards and qualifications.

Deteriorating standards of nursing education has been noted even as foreign demand for Filipino nurses began rising. A study on the "brain drain" of Filipino health personnel noted that even as enrollment in nursing schools has risen tremendously, the number of their graduates able to pass the nursing boards has been steadily falling.

If we continue to send unqualified and unskilled nurses abroad, demand for Filipino nurses in these countries could very well dry up.

Again, a case of killing the goose that lays the golden eggs?

Has their luck run out?

COMMENTARY

Denis Murphy

WE HAVE GROWN USED TO POVERTY AND can become not exactly numb to our neighbor's suffering, but we can find ourselves helping in a routine, matter-of-course way that never solves problems and doesn't even intend to solve them. The situation in Escopa, Project 4, Quezon City, where 150 poor families whose homes were destroyed by fire on Dec. 26, 2005 are still living in a covered basketball court, is a good example.

According to Google, "Escopa" is a card game played in Brazil that was introduced there by Italian immigrants. It's a gambling game. For the fire victims of Escopa, it has been bad luck so far, but the game is not over.

The families lived under the Katipunan-Aurora flyover where it angles down to the south side of Aurora. Some families lived there with less than a foot of headroom under the road overhead. The day after Christmas, the homes were destroyed, and for several reasons, including the safety of the flyover, they were not allowed to return. Of the 175 families affected, 150 now stay in the covered court. It measures about 600 to 800 sq m, which gives each family 3 to 4 sq m, after allowing some room for aisles and public space. People continually fight over space, and one man has been clubbed to death with a lead pipe.

I talked to several women, including Cora Galete, 40, married with seven children; Rosalie Alo, married with three children; Tess Austaliano, married with five children; and Jessie Loreto, married with two grown-up boys.

The women told me the worst aspects of life in the covered court include the loud, constant noise and the smell due to lack of toilets. Three portalets were given by the city government after the fire, but they were taken away shortly after.

There are daily fights, robberies and widespread drunkenness. There is no electricity during the day when the court is like an oven, they said. The roof leaks and strong rains blow through the sides of the court soaking everyone. The children are sick with scabies, colds, rashes, fevers, diarrhea and chicken pox. Those I saw looked thin and worn out. Most children don't go to school because they lost their uniforms and shoes in the fire.

In response, NGOs, the local Catholic Church, other religious groups and neighbors, including my family, have given food and old clothes. The city government, according to the women, gave each family P2,000 and has then seemed to have stepped away from the problem. The National Housing Authority is said to be ready to relocate the families to Towerville and Gawad Kalinga promises to build homes for the people there provided it has partners (donors). That would be a significant help, but it is still just a hope. The help has been inadequate.

Conditions get worse each month, I was told. It is a place that degrades human beings.

The women are industrious, but the amount of interest some pay to the "Bombay" usurer is staggering. Cora, for example, borrows P1,000 every day to buy eggs for sale. Every night she pays P1,020 back. In a month, she is paying interest of P600 on the P1,000; in a year, it would rise to P7,200—an annual interest of 720 percent!

A number of the husbands have regular jobs as bakers, welders, tricycle drivers. Their main problem is a place to stay, not income. They don't, however, look forward to Towerville even with a Gawad Kalinga house, because there are no jobs in Towerville for bakers, egg vendors, welders. The families will have to split up: wage earners in Quezon City, families in Towerville.

It's hard to accuse any helping group of cold heartedness, yet all the groups together have hardly made a dent on the problem. We help our neighbor, but we don't help whole-heartedly as the Samaritan did. He cured the man whom he found by the roadside. He paid for medicines and lodging, and stayed with him till he was better.

The women don't express anger, though some said they were angry "inside." "We can't do anything, so why get angry?" they say. "If we cry out, no one will hear."

The 150 families are suffering in the middle of Project 4, a comfortable middle-class housing development. Blue Ridge Subdivision, a higher-end development, is 100 meters away. There are many churches, NGOs and civic groups, but the suffering goes on. If even a few groups stayed with the problem, the situation might improve. A community the size of Project 4, which has resources of all kinds, should be able to care for 150 families. Kagawad Beth Dalumaya stays with the problem, but she needs help.

Can something be done about the interest rates the people pay? Can we supply free water for a time? Right now, families pay P450 a month more or less for water they can hardly afford. Can the city government bring back the portalets before someone gets fatally sick?

There are structural problems of poverty that one community cannot solve, but water, school uniforms, toilets—these we should be able to provide. If the smaller problems can be solved, a community may have the momentum and confidence to work on the larger issues, on the housing problem, for example.

Maybe luck hasn't run out for the 150 families.

Denis Murphy works with the Urban Poor Associates.

Riding the tiger

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THREE YEARS, ELEVEN MONTHS AND SIX DAYS. AS OF Monday, by President Macapagal-Arroyo's own count, that's how long she intends to stay in power.

Which got me thinking: since she took power on Jan. 20, 2001 we've had her, as of Monday, for five years, six months and four days.

Ms Arroyo's State of the Nation Address (Sona) has been criticized for not dealing at all with where we are now, instead dishing out unrealistic promises of infrastructure projects. But if you look at the years, months and days of her presidency, it becomes clear that the Sona was indeed a political update, although one that, Gloria-style, revolves around herself. Her Sona was her way of saying: "I've survived beyond five years, the normal term the Constitution gives to a President, and I did that against all odds. Moreover, I intend to survive till 2010."

Payback

With that context, it's easier to understand how Monday's Sona was crafted as a kind of theatrical payback to all who have kept her in power. Thus, the extended "thank you" portion to start off her speech, as she named all her loyalists, each sentence interrupted by applause.

The most lavish praise went to her supporters in the military, for obvious reasons. Then there were the loyal members of the House of Representatives, the ones who blocked impeachment investigations. There were the governors, mayors and local government executives, key players in moving the "people's initiative" forward to change the Constitution.

Significant, too, were her silences. She completely ignored the senators, reciprocating their deep affection for her. Strangely, she didn't heap praise on the Catholic bishops, whose last pastoral letter stunned the nation with its subservience to the regime.

But Ms Arroyo's speech-writers know better than to stoke the allegations going around about bought bishops. The Sona acknowledged the bishops through another route: a silence on population issues. That didn't pass unnoticed, with several commentators, from Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla to Dong Puno and guests on the latter's talk show, expressing amazement over her continuing denial of this aspect of family welfare and national development. As I mentioned in an earlier column, the bishops seem to have bartered the nation's soul in exchange for assurances that Ms Arroyo will maintain her "pro-life" (read: anti-family planning) stance.

After the praise came the promises, in effect saying, "If you stick with me till 2010, and maybe beyond, here's what I have to offer." Amid the thunderous applause, one could almost hear the cash registers ringing in the politicians' heads as she described infrastructure projects. It was not accidental that she hardly mentioned education and health, where juicy commissions and kickbacks are harder to come by compared with roads and infrastructure funds.

I squirmed, too, upon hearing mention of super regions in the Sona. There could be another carrot in there for our political mules, these super regions possibly being an appetizer for the proposed federal system that would be introduced if we change the Constitution and shift to a new parliamentary system.

State of war

There was no lack of incentives for Ms Arroyo's loyalists, but the night of the Sona, ABC (Channel 5) had an excellent documentary, "State of War," to remind us that the biggest winners in the current political chess game are the militarists among her advisers.

"State of War" focused on the President's declaration of "all-out war" on the communists and featured interviews with the military, the New People's Army (NPA), cause-oriented leaders, and residents in several communities labeled as sympathetic to the rebels.

It was from "State of War" that I learned of another count, coming from the human rights group Karapatan, which alleges that there have been 709 extra-judicial executions during the Arroyo presidency, a figure only slightly lower than the 766 killed from 1986 to 2001 during the presidencies of Aquino, Ramos and Estrada.

The documentary showed a military "interaction," targeting villages suspected of being sympathetic to the NPA. There was chilling footage of military men hired to try to "win over" the villagers through a combination of tearful demagoguery ("What are the communists doing to our beloved Mother Country?") and slapstick humor.

There were outright threats, too. In one scene, villagers were warned about a neighboring town's priests, described as "*makademonyo*" (pro-demon). The villagers were then asked if anyone had, in the last elections, supported party-list candidates from Bayan Muna, Anakbayan, Anakpawis, Akbayan or Gabriela. "Come forward and clear your name," the military man cajoled them, "because for sure you are a member of the (Communist) Party."

I wondered if the military men knew how ideologically diverse these groups are, but then, do they really care to make distinctions?

Then there was the daughter of a peasant NGO leader, tearfully expressing her fears for her father's life. That segment was a stark reminder that both the Armed Forces and the NPA have their arms while the NGO leaders only have their commitment, which unfortunately will not ward off the bullets. Should it be surprising if more of these leaders and their followers eventually give up on democratic processes and take to the hills? "State of War" had interviews with NPA cadres, including students who had joined the rebels.

The controversial Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, singled out for praise in Ms Arroyo's Sona, was the star of the documentary. Some of the general's remarks were vintage doublespeak. An example: "I don't think most of them (the victims of 'salvagings') are really innocent."

At one point, Palparan described the military: "We are the coercive power of the state." I don't know if he is aware that such a description is also used by Marxist revolutionaries, who argue that because a state survives through coercion, there is no way to achieve social change except through armed struggle.

After the Sona, after "State of War," I thought, sadly, of how Ms Arroyo's promises and praise have further reinforced traditional politics with its horse-trading and bartering. Worse, hounded by her own insecurities, she has chosen to ride the military tiger which she will never be able to dismount, placing herself and the nation in deep peril. Before the end of her term, a mere 1,431 days from now, she may yet have another dubious achievement: reviving Southeast Asia's last communist insurgency.

'Bad Kings'

Bad queens aside, Gilda Cordero Fernando's new children's book, "Bad Kings," will be read out tomorrow at 6 p.m. at Podium by the likes of National Artists Virgilio Almario and Napoleon Abueva, Repertory Philippines' Joy Virata and Cultural Center Chair Emily Abrera.

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Decent life and sex education

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

I AM AN EDUCATOR, A GRADUATE FROM the College of Education of the University of the Philippines. I come from a family of doctors—grandparents, three siblings of my mom, three close cousins. My grandfather and my mom's sister gave themselves to the medical field of obstetrics. My grandfather, who passed away in 2000, was the "Father of Family Planning in the Philippines." My grandfather's commitment to the family planning program in our country was a consequence of his concern for the poor and dedication to helping them. Sad to say, he was misled by the myth about overpopulation as the cause of our people's poverty.

But my mom's sister, who is very much into the practice and teaching of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Santo Tomas, owing to her orientation in that institution, has not fallen into the wrong conclusion.

Sex education in public schools is of important concern to me. The news item which appeared in the INQUIRER last July 9 brings to mind closely related issues addressed by the reproductive health bills in the Senate. I trust that the committee members handling those bills will deal with the issues responsibly and honestly, as well as with prudence and with the vision of quality life for all Filipinos.

Definitely, all honest-to-goodness doctors and educators have this vision. Population control, promotion of "safe sex" and "safer sex" only address superficially our people's aspiration for quality life. The fact is, quality life can be had through just laws and programs on health and for man and society.

Our vision of quality life is not just of mouths regularly fed, or of stomachs always made full. Our vision of quality life is anchored on the value of human life, the dignity of a human person, the essential need of man, a social being, to be part of a family that he or she can call his/her own. This family can only come about when a woman and a man commit themselves to each other and to child-rearing through marriage before God, the source of all human life. Male or female, we were all created in the image and likeness of God. We are not mere bodies; we are rational beings tasked to administer the earth and join our Creator in the life hereafter.

Quality life is not just about enjoying financial stability or wealth. A brother and a cousin suffer from cerebral palsy. No amount of money or faith in science can make them normal boys. But they are happy because family members accept, respect and love them.

Must we waste our poor country's money, time and educational system by promoting population control, "safe sex" and the reproductive rights (a misnomer) of women? Must we spend more to (mis)educate generations of Filipinos into not seeing beyond the superficials of quality life? Do we expect them to lead this nation in its march to progress or to bridge us to the rest of the world?

—JHOANNA NAVARRO,
Barangay Ugong, Pasig City

Wanted: protectors of commuters

LIKE MOST FILIPINOS, I RIDE ON JEEPNEYS, buses and multicabs each day. I travel across two cities from Mandaue to Mactan for work. It takes two to three rides, and costs me P21 on the average, one way.

For quite some time, I have noticed the deteriorating conditions of multicabs being used as public utility vehicles (PUVs). You will notice that they are pick-ups converted into passenger vehicles. Surely, upon reaching your destination, your back will be hurting.

Is there a law or any government agency that looks after the safety of the passengers? Nobody seems to care about the condition of our PUVs. Some have fuel stored in plastic gallons placed under the front seat.

We are already paying a lot for trip-cutting vehicles that, instead of going from Mandaue to Soong or Punta Engaño Mactan, stop in the Mactan Export Processing Zone and force us to take another multicab. Yes, we all earn a living and we do understand the jeepney drivers' needs, but where are the authorities tasked to ensure the safety and protect the interest of commuters?

—ANTHONY GENE VILLAMOR,
anthonigene@gmail.com

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

The lost lighthouses of Ilocos Sur

By Frank Cimatu and Leoncio Balbin Jr.
Candon City

EDITOR'S Note: This is the fourth of a series of reports on lighthouses in Northern Luzon. The INQUIRER is featuring these century-old structures to highlight their importance to the country's northern sea lanes and call public attention to their neglect.

A BOY is mesmerized by the towering 20-meter lighthouse of Candon City in Ilocos Sur.
LEONCIO BALBIN JR.

ILOCOS SUR is one of the oldest provinces in the country and an important trading center for the Spaniards. The Chinese pirate Limahong used to pillage the settlements there and later traded with local folk four centuries ago.

The province has an extensive shoreline, but many residents are wondering why they can't spot a lighthouse as imposing as Cape Bojeador at the tip of Ilocos Norte.

But the lighthouses of Ilocos Sur are there, albeit forgotten and neglected. Now, local officials are calling for the restoration of the "lost beacons."

The once important lighthouses during the Spanish times are in Narvacan, San Esteban and Sinait towns, Vice Gov. Deogracias Savellano said.

"These are brick monuments of history. As much as we wanted to restore them, we have no funds yet for this project," Savellano said.

The structure in Narvacan may not even be a lighthouse but a watchtower.

Michael Canosa, 42, a resident of Barangay Sulvec, said the old brick facility in their backyard was built during the time of the Spaniards.

Canosa said based on the stories shared by his relatives, his great grandfather, Lope Canosa, was among the recruited soldiers who served as sentry under the Spanish government.

The watchtower was used to warn residents of the arrival of pirates.

"They would blow a horn to signal the arrival of the pirates for residents to prepare," Canosa said.

The watchtower is deteriorating; its bricks chipping off due to exposure to the elements. The ownership of the area where the watchtower sits is also being disputed in court between the Canosas and the municipal government.

Reminders

Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson has initiated moves to restore the lighthouse in nearby San Esteban. "Even if these lighthouses are obsolete, they are still important reminders of the glory that was Ilocos Sur," he said.

He said lighthouses used to draw the community together. To make his point, he converted the Parola lighthouse in Barangay Darapidap in Candon City into a promenade. The lighthouse was built in the 1950s.

A boardwalk, a fountain and a mini-stage were inaugurated in the area in April. Bands perform onstage during the balmy summer nights. Singson said an amusement park would be added later.

The 20-meter lighthouse is useful to fishermen in the town, Eduardo Villanueva, chair of Barangay Darapidap, said. "It serves as a reference for fishermen during blackouts."

At first, they used kerosene for the beacon until 1971 when electricity was tapped in the village.

Another modern lighthouse is in Cabugao town.

Savellano said the historic Dardarat lighthouse also guided fishermen's voyages to the Salomague port. Because of the port, Salomague is among the few Ilocos villages found on ancient mariner's maps.

"During the American occupation, it served as a mooring place for USS Manauili that ferried thousands of mostly Ilocano residents across the Pacific to work at sugar plantations in Hawaii and California," Savellano said.

Now leased to a private corporation, it is the transshipment port of goods and products to Taiwan. It is also the unloading point of commercial fishing vessels.

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For this student, disability not a hindrance

By Melvin Gascon
Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya

INSIDE THE CRAMPED OFFICE OF PERSONS WITH disabilities (PWD) at the provincial capitol site in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, Christopher Joseph Abriam pores over sheets of paper containing the list of members of their organization.

"I'm happy here," says Abriam, sitting on his wheelchair, as he taps on a computer keyboard to update members' records of monthly dues.

A MARIAN devotee, Abriam cites the importance of prayers in helping him overcome his limitations and strive for excellence.
MELVIN GASCON

At the PWD headquarters, where the group manages a canteen, a boating lagoon, a children's park and a bicycle-for-hire business, it is not uncommon to see handicapped persons working and doing activities like ordinary individuals.

But to many, including his colleagues in the PWD, Abriam's case is different.

The 22-year-old political science graduate now works there as a volunteer, and gets P500 as monthly allowance. This is for one who graduated magna cum laude in college, and just recently, was chosen among the country's 10 outstanding students.

Abriam has been on a wheelchair for the past six years. He is suffering from a condition known as Charcot-Marie-Tooth (CMT), a hereditary, neuromuscular disorder that causes weakening and subsequent disability of a person's hands and feet, and progresses toward the arms, legs and to the body.

Members of the PWD community in the province rejoiced as President Macapagal-Arroyo handed the award to one of their kind, giving deeper meaning to this year's celebration of the National Disability Awareness Week.

"I would be happier if other people, especially the youth like me, would see my achievement as an inspiration," Abriam says.

The TOSP awards is an annual, nationwide search sponsored by the RFM Foundation Inc. to recognize students who can be held as role models, and who exemplify academic excellence, exemplary leadership, good moral values and determination to serve.

This year's 10 awardees were selected from 225 student nominees from all over the country. The number was later trimmed to 131, then to the final 30.

The finalists were subjected to meticulous screening, including a panel interview by judges who included former Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and former Sen. Wigberto Tañada.

"Succeeding in spite of one's disability should not be an excuse; it's a matter of personal conviction. With this little accomplishment, I hope I was able to prove to people that physically challenged individuals can perform even better that most 'normal' people," Abriam says.

But more than anything else, he says the TOSP experience has bolstered his desire to help and to serve, regardless of the material rewards.

The award also boosted his confidence in mingling with other able-bodied people, eliminating that skepticism that normally hounds handicapped people.

"I have proven that most people will accept me for who I am, that most people are genuinely kind," he said.

Abriam topped the 2005 graduates of the Saint Mary's University (SMU) in Bayombong, finishing his Bachelor of Science in Political Science course, magna cum laude.

The feat is even more extraordinary, considering that he had to attend classes on a wheelchair for almost the entire four years of his studies.

"It was quite difficult because there were a lot of places in the university that I could not go to because of my condition. I also found it very hard at first to let my classmates realize that I was just like them, and thus, should not be treated differently," he says.

Abriam also received the SMU's Likha Award for outstanding thesis, and is former editor in chief of the university paper, The Marian.

He is the youngest of five children of Dominador and Corazon Abriam, both educators.

At 2, Christopher was first diagnosed by doctors to be suffering from polio. His legs were fitted with metal braces to enable him to stand and walk without having to hold on to objects for support.

At 13, Abriam underwent reexamination by a neurologist, who declared that he was suffering from CMT syndrome.

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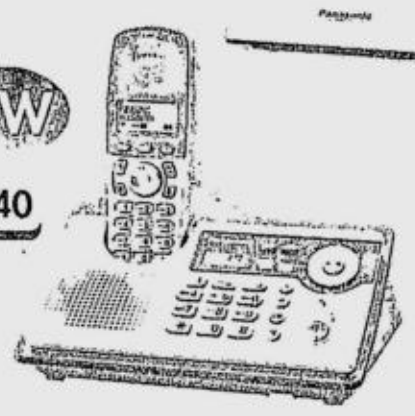

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AFP to clear 'super region' of Reds

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CAMP AQUINO, TARLAC CITY—Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Armed Forces chief of staff, on Tuesday ordered military officials in Northern Luzon to "bring more forces to the front lines" to defeat the communist insurgency in the regions.

Esperon gave the order to Maj. Gen. Bonifacio Ramos, who assumed the military's Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom) here on Tuesday.

He also gave Ramos more authority to draw and deploy soldiers from the special operations command, training and doctrine command and those assigned to the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority on top of the Army, Navy and Air Force units under the unified command of the Nolcom. It covers the Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Cordillera and Central Luzon.

"We won't retreat. We need to be more visible," Esperon said.

Ramos was also ordered to review the fusion of intelligence and civil-military operations to achieve maximum results in the government's counterinsurgency drive.

Esperon said the work of the military and the Philippine National Police was to provide a secured environment conducive for investments in the country's five super regions, the new master plan of the Arroyo administration.

Government forces, he said, needed to defeat communism to make democracy work for the benefit of the people and the country.

Nolcom's role was crucial, he said, noting that the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army were established in its territory.

Esperon did not give figures on the troop deployment but said the military would match, if not surpass, the communist rebels' forces.

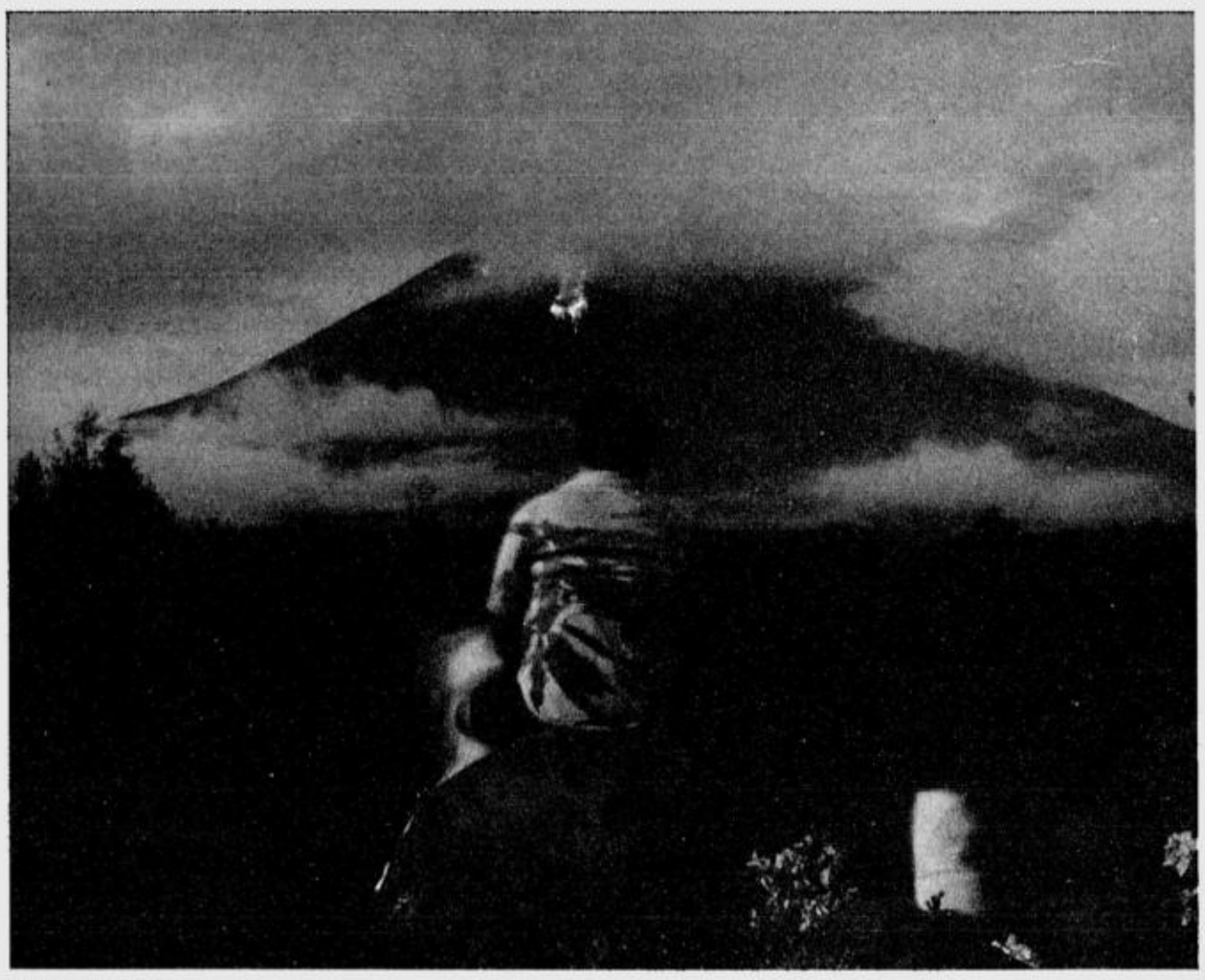
Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, former Nolcom commander and now Army chief, estimated the number of rebels operating in Northern and Central Luzon at 1,000.

Esperon said the objective of the additional deployment was to "drag them [rebels] out and uproot them from their bases."

These bases, he said, are guerrilla zones where the NPA has established "shadow governments" and "white areas" or urban and rural centers where rebels have established logistics and mass support.

"In the middle of this conflict, the frontline is not really defined but it is where the enemy operates," Ramos said.

The shifting of more forces to urban centers was not an entirely new concept. Tolentino first implemented it through Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, chief of the Army's 7th Infantry Division.



NIGHT VIEW EDWIN BACASMAS

The glow of lava flow from Mayon Volcano is visible at night, attracting sightseers. Volcanologists are keeping watch over the country's most famous volcano and are warning of a major eruption in the coming days. This side of Mayon was photographed in Barangay Matanag in Legazpi City.

Water contaminated in Mayon settlements

LEGAZPI CITY—WATER SUPPLY IN the two evacuation centers in Sto. Domingo, Albay was found to be contaminated with bacteria that could cause a diarrhea outbreak, the provincial health office said.

Dr. Luis Mendoza, provincial health officer, said bacteriological tests have to be made to find out what particular bacteria contaminate the water although authorities have already started treating the water.

"We have already chlorinated the water systems but it will still take one week to take effect," Mendoza said.

As of 3 p.m. Saturday, there were 495 families or 2,335 persons in the San Andres Resettlement Site and the Bical High School—the evacuation centers holding people from the villages of Sto. Domingo, Albay, one of the high-risk municipalities on the southeast quadrant of Mayon Volcano.

Evacuees at the San Andres Resettlement site built temporary shelters made of wood and nipa.

"We have already warned the evacuees to first boil the water before drinking," he said.

The main sources of water in the evacuation centers were pumps and the village water systems.

Villagers began fleeing their homes without official advice from the Municipal Disaster Coordinating Council (MDCC) on July 20 and 21 after Mayon shot lava fragments and ash into the air. Strong winds carried these to the villages of Lidong, Sta. Misericordia, Fidel Surtida, and San Fernando.

Romeo Cabria, MDCC action officer, said the permanent 6-km danger zone was uninhabited.

The Phivolcs' latest advisory says lava continued to flow out of Mayon's crater.

While visibility was reduced to zero by clouds, the Phivolcs monitored Mayon through ground vibrations.

It recorded 325 earthquakes triggered by Mayon's restiveness.

Mayon's emission of sulfur dioxide was measured at 7,000 tons per day from 1,251 as of July 16. *Ephraim Aguilar, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Board in quandary over chemical containers

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—THE provincial board has found itself in a quandary on whether to approve a Buguias town ordinance requiring all chemical companies to retrieve the empty containers of their products.

The board members were torn between endorsing the provincial legal office's recommendation to junk the ordinance for being "legally flawed" or uphold this in line with the town's police powers to enact measures protecting the environment.

Buguias Mayor Thomas Palileng signed the ordinance in June as a way to rid the town's vegetable farms and rivers of unwanted chemical containers that were blamed as the sources of chemical residues that pollute farms and water resources.

The ordinance was the first in Benguet and its passage was considered a bold move in complying with the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 (Republic Act 9003).

But lawyer Leticia Gutierrez-Duran, provincial legal officer, said the ordinance would violate the constitutional right against involuntary servitude when the companies were compelled to retrieve the containers against their will.

"Once the chemical is bought from the manufacturer, distributor or outlet, the ownership over the product, which covers both content and container, would pass on to the buyer or farmer," Duran's report to the board said.

"The container forms part of the purchase price and therefore the disposal of the container would be innate to the consumer or farmer," it said.

The report, which the board took up in Monday's session, said the farmer who used the chemical would be responsible for any liability that might arise from the improper disposal of the container, and not the company.

Some board members, however, disagreed with Duran's report, saying she failed to read the Benguet environmental code that called for the protection of the province's vegetable farms, forests and the ecosystem.

Board Members Juan Nazarro Jr. and Aloysius Kato said Buguias enacted the measure pursuant to its police powers to ensure the protection and safety of its people and environment.

They also cited the general welfare clause in the Local Government Code that allowed provinces, towns and cities to initiate programs that would promote the well being of the community.

Nazarro said the ordinance could be amended to insert a "buy back" provision where the chemical companies would be encouraged to work with local farmers on the prospect of selling the empty containers back to them. *Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Permits absent in Narra mining

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—MINING CONTINUES in the town of Narra, Palawan without permits.

While the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) recently issued a cease and desist order against a mining firm for operating without a permit in Barangays Princess Urduja and Malinao in the town of Narra, Palawan, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources was quiet on the operations of another firm, the Platinum Group Metals Corp. (PGMC) that also operates without a permit in the town.

The environment group Kilusang Laban sa Mina sa Narra (KLMN) said the PGMC owner, Rafael Atayde, and Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes, are close to each other.

The MGB recently shut down the operations of Sara Marie Mining Inc. upon the complaint of the Commission on Social and Special Concerns (CSSC), a body under the Palawan Archdiocese.

The CSSC reported to the MGB that Sara Marie continued to drill despite a cease and desist order from the MGB in June last year. *Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Priests for overseas mission

COTABATO CITY—The Archdiocese of Cotabato on Monday sent three Filipino priests for overseas missions in line with its "Global Solidarity Program" to assist places without religious vocations. Cotabato Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, OMI, said a special Mass had been offered to diocesan friars Ben Torreto, Jaime Mencias and George Canto following their departure. Torreto and Mencias are headed for Alaska, while Canto will join two other Filipino priests, Francis de la Cruz and Lenard Sabio, in Canada. Despite the current shortage of priests in the country, Quevedo said it was nice to offer "gift of faith priests," trained to do missionary work in poor and remote places in the world. *Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Man held for kidnapping

COTABATO CITY—Authorities in Iligan City arrested on Friday the suspected leader of an armed group that kidnapped a Lanao del Sur election official last month. Brig Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino, deputy commander of the military's Southern Command, said Elias Makil yielded a hand grenade when arrested. Makil was the alleged leader of a gang that snatched 56-year-old Disalungan Pulala, an official of the Commission on Elections in Lanao del Sur. The victim was later released in Balo'i, Lanao del Norte. *Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

2 racing teeners face raps

BACOLOD CITY—Criminal charges would be filed against the youth representative in the provincial board and a teenager who held a race on a busy street here and were blamed for a five-vehicle accident that killed a schoolteacher and injured three others. Lorenzo Peña Suatengco, 19, youth representative in the provincial board and son of ex-Pulupandan Mayor Tony Suatengco, and his 17-year-old companion will be charged with homicide and physical injuries. Police said the two were racing in their Honda Civic cars and caused accidents that led to the death of teacher Augusto Vicente de Leon, 40. Suatengco suffered a fractured kneecap while Marvin Ortiz had head injuries. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Schools get computers

ALEOSAN, North Cotabato—The US Agency for International Development has provided more computers to high school students in Mindanao. Robert Barnes, an adviser for the USAID-funded Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM), said at least 700 more schools would receive computers under the Computer and Internet Connection Program. In Pagangan National High School here, the GEM also provided students free one-year Internet access. *Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

3 die, 30 hurt in collision

ILOILO CITY—Three persons were killed and at least 30 others were hurt early Friday when a truck they were riding in collided with another truck in Pototan, Iloilo, 34 km north of here. The passengers of the Isuzu Elf Truck were on their way to attend a wedding in Bugasong, Antique from Barangay Tugabong in Passi City, 59 km north of here, when their truck hit another truck at about 5 a.m. on Parcon and Ledesma Streets, a police report said. The other truck was loaded with motorcycles and was on its way to Roxas City in Capiz. Killed were truck driver Nestor Solis, 43; Corita Paloma, 60; and Segundina Jaleco. *Nestor Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau*

Cabibi Festival in Cagayan

TUGUEGARAO CITY—The town of Lallo in Cagayan will celebrate its 211th founding anniversary by staging the Cabibi Festival from July 31 to Aug 4. The town will feature the native "*cabibi*," or freshwater shells (bivalves), found in the Cagayan River in Lallo, Gattaran and Camalaniugan towns. Archeologists have discovered layers of ancient shells in various spots in the town, showing that early Cagayanos had subsisted on river shells. Officials said the festival would feature a cooking event to showcase various recipes of *cabibi*. Guests will also be treated to a tour in the ruins of the Spanish-era Tabacalera, the trading center for tobacco during the ancient galleon trade here. *Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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NISSAN

Michael Ray pleads guilty in US spy case

From page A1

Fort Monmouth in New Jersey.

In pleading guilty in May to conspiracy, Aragoncillo said he gave the information to Aquino and opposition politicians in his homeland who wanted to oust Ms Arroyo.

"Aquino is now an admitted spy who cultivated and used Aragoncillo, a willing accomplice, to transfer US intelligence secrets abroad," said US Attorney Christopher Christie.

Who is the official?

"He did this at the behest of a high-level government official in the Philippine legislature. We view that as a grave intrusion on the integrity of our national security, and we will seek the longest prison sentence possible for Aquino," Christie said.

Through his lawyer, Aquino has never denied possessing the documents, but maintained he did not know they were secret.

Interest in events at home

"There was no way to know they were classified," defense lawyer Mark Berman said after the hearing. "He didn't know they contained information related to military preparedness. He didn't know it was classified."

AQUINO

ARAGONCILLO

Berman said Aquino "had a continuing interest in events in the Philippines. He is someone who is not a supporter of the current government in the Philippines.

"Aragoncillo offered information to him," Berman said.

"He shouldn't have accepted it, but he did," he added.

His lawyer has said Aragoncillo was acting out of a sense of patriotism because he believed developments in his homeland were going badly. He is to be sentenced next month.

The recipients included former President Joseph Estrada, who was ousted five years ago; Sen. Panfilo Lacson, a leader of the political opposition in the Philippines, and former House Speaker Arnulfo Fuentebella.

Estrada and Lacson have acknowledged receiving information from Aquino or Aragoncillo, but deny any wrongdoing.

Likely to be deported

Berman said all Aquino was asked to do was introduce Aragoncillo to Lacson, which he did via e-mail. Afterward, Aragoncillo started sending him documents he had pilfered from government files, the attorney said.

Aquino was once a senior officer under Lacson in the Philippine National Police. He fled to the United States to escape murder charges in 2001 and lived with his wife and son in Queens, New York.

After serving his prison term, he is likely to be deported.

Earlier this year, another former police officer, ex-Senior Supt. Cesar Mancao, was taken into FBI custody in Florida. The Department of Foreign Affairs said at the time that Mancao was arrested "as a material witness in the espionage case."

Mancao and Aquino served in Estrada's defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force previously headed by Lacson, who was then PNP director general.

Consular help

Prosecutors will seek a sentence of between 70 and 87 months when Aquino is sentenced Oct. 30. But Berman will argue that lower federal sentencing guidelines, of between 37 and 46 months, should apply.

The final decision is up to the judge.

In Manila, the DFA said the Philippine consulate general in New York would continue to provide Aquino with consular assistance.

"The consulate will ensure that due process is observed in this case of Mr. Aquino," DFA spokersperson Gilberto Asuque said at a press briefing.

The DFA said that, according to the US Attorney's Office, the US government calculates Aquino's sentence will be "at least 70 months and up to 120 months."

"Under the terms of Mr. Aquino's plea agreement, the parties will make their respective arguments at sentencing," the DFA said in a statement.

Wife and child

Aquino was represented by his personal lawyer throughout the investigation and hearing of the case.

Aside from monitoring the case, the Philippine consulate had asked the Passaic County jail, where Aquino is detained, to allow him to use its "sun room," be visited by his wife and child, and have access to religious articles.

AP, with Nikko Dizon, Inquirer

What Went Before

FORMER POLICE SENIOR SUPT. MICHAEL RAY Aquino, who fled to the United States after being implicated in the November 2000 murder of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito, was arrested in his New York residence on Sept. 10, 2005 for espionage.

He was accused of receiving from Leandro Aragoncillo in May to August last year classified documents about Filipino leaders, and transmitting 101 of these documents to political enemies of President Arroyo.

Aquino admitted receiving e-mails from Aragoncillo but said he had no way of knowing the information was classified.

Grand jury

Aquino was indicted by a federal grand jury on Oct. 6, 2005. He and Aragoncillo face charges of conspiracy and acting as unregistered foreign agents. Initially, or two weeks after his indictment, Aquino pleaded not guilty to the charges. His lawyer Mark Berman said Aquino rejected a plea deal.

Aragoncillo entered into plea negotiations. As a result, he escaped the death penalty, the maximum sentence for conspiring to transmit national defense information, and now faces 15 to 20 years in prison.

Aragoncillo's sentencing is scheduled for Aug. 14. *Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research*

IN THE KNOW

PLEA BARGAINING IS THE PROCESS BY WHICH benefits, like lighter charges and sentences, are offered in exchange for a defendant's guilty plea. The negotiation takes place between the prosecutor and the defense counsel, who bargain over charges and sentences.

Once the defendant agrees to the decision reached by the prosecutor and defense counsel, they will recommend the plea bargain to the judge on the day of arraignment. The judge can either follow or set aside the recommendation.

Judges, prosecutors and defense counsels sometimes resort to plea bargaining to ensure a speedy trial and to reduce their caseload. The process is also less expensive and less time-consuming for the defendant.

Plea bargains helped two former Philippine beauty queens who were arrested separately in Guam for shabu possession in the 1990s. Drug felony charges against Alma Concepcion were dropped in 1998 when she pleaded guilty to misprision of a felony (concealment of the knowledge of a felony). Her plea bargain called for a 20-day imprisonment, $5,000-fine and drug counseling. Had she not entered into a plea bargain, she could have been jailed for up to 25 years.

Anjanette Abayari was detained the following year, but was only ordered to go on probation for three years, undergo rehabilitation and pay a $9,200 fine after she pleaded guilty to drug possession charges. She could have been sentenced to 20 years in prison and fined $10,000. *Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research*

Plea may have saved Ping, Erap from suits

From page A1

mented" opposition was scrambling to look for a viable leader to replace her.

Lacson said that "it is now clearly established that there was no conspiracy and that nobody hired Aquino to act as a foreign agent."

Talking with reporters later, Lacson stressed that the act of "receiving and keeping" classified information was "personal" to Aquino.

Aquino's own decision

"I think, most likely, other persons referred to as unindicted coconspirators ... will not be touched. Let's find out. Although there's a decision, the sentencing won't happen until Oct. 30," Lacson said.

Lacson, who served as national police chief under Estrada and was at the time Aquino's boss, said he did not influence Aquino to make his guilty plea.

That was Aquino's "own personal decision," he said.

"I gave him all the decision. I said that he (should) think what was best for him, for everyone else. That's what he should do," Lacson said.

Plea bargain

"He thought long and hard about it before he made the plea bargain because he thought the evidence being presented in court was very weak."

Lacson said that at one point, the defense had thought of getting depositions "of certain people in the Philippines, but it could create a stir between US and Philippine relations."

"It might come out that it was the US government or agents, in the first place, who were spying on the Philippines."

The senator admitted that Aquino had been consulting him by phone through his (Aquino's) wife before he entered his plea, and that he had assured Aquino that he and others would "always lend a helping hand to his family during their difficult and trying times."

'At peace with himself'

"I communicated with his wife this morning. He seemed at peace with himself when he decided to agree to a plea bargain," Lacson said.

He said that Aquino had expressed optimism he would get a relatively light prison term because he had helped the US government when he was a Philippine law enforcer.

Beyond RP reach

"The judge may give him 0-10 years but Aquino is optimistic he will ... get 3 to 4 years because of several mitigating circumstances, like helping the US

ESTRADA

LACSON

GONZALEZ

government in the past when he was still a PNP officer," Lacson said.

"Personally, I'm still hoping for the best for him in the sense that hopefully, he will be meted out the minimum sentence."

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said that Aquino's guilty plea might have achieved two things: It might have effectively reduced the chances of his dragging opposition politicians into the espionage mess, and it put him beyond the reach of Philippine courts—at least for now—in the murder cases he is facing at home.

Aquino has been linked to the November 2000 murder of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and Dacer's driver, Emmanuel Corbito.

Gonzalez said Aquino's guilty plea served to weaken the conspiracy angle involving opposition leaders in the Philippines because the absence of a lengthy trial reduced the chances of Aquino implicating alleged coconspirators.

Linkage weakened

"I think so," Gonzalez said when asked if the guilty plea was a legal tactic to weaken any links between Aquino and Filipino politicians.

Gonzalez said, however, that all these legal scenarios would depend on the conditions agreed upon by Aquino and the US authorities.

"It depends on the conditions between the prosecution and the defense," Gonzalez said. "If he has made revelations, then he could implicate [them], especially if they can prove that conspiracy exists. The act of one becomes the act of all."

Dacer-Corbito case

Gonzalez said the US case also effectively placed Aquino out of the reach of the Philippine government because he would have to serve his sentence there.

The Philippine government has indicated its intention to prosecute Aquino on criminal charges involving the killing of Dacer and his driver.

Asked if Aquino's contacts in the Philippines, such as Estrada, could still be charged with espionage, Gonzalez said: "Yes, they can always indict him there ... From the very start, they were considered as unindicted coconspirators."

Could they be charged in absentia? "If the US is really bent on doing that, yes, certainly," Gonzalez said. "Before, they were saying that if Ping will go there, he will be indicted..."

More information needed

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said the government was still waiting for more information "and then the Department of Justice will make the necessary studies."

He said the DOJ would have to study whether Aquino had violated Philippine laws by benefiting from classified US documents he was able to obtain.

"In the case of the Philippines, there could be basis to ... file charges" over obtaining information about bringing down the administration, Defensor said.

Defensor said he was interested in finding out what Aquino's statements were and whether he had named his coconspirators.

"Unless we see the actual plea bargain, everything will be speculation," he said. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

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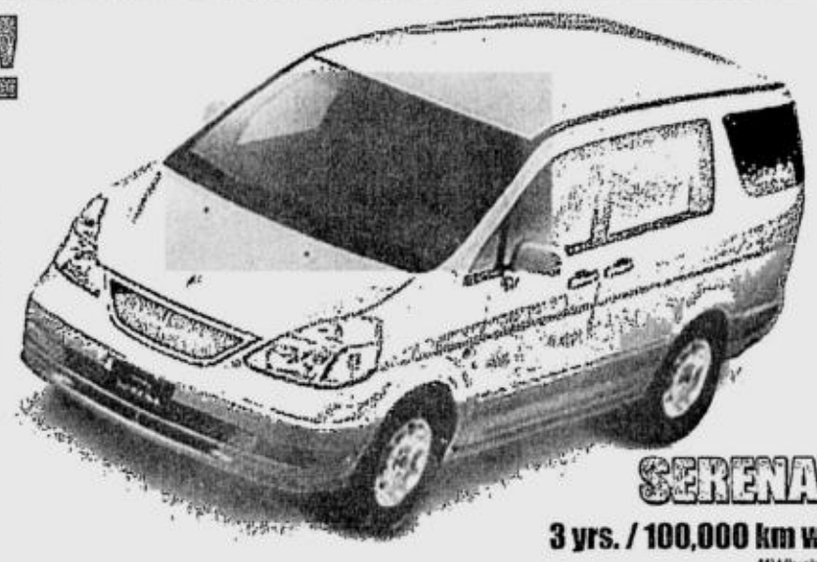

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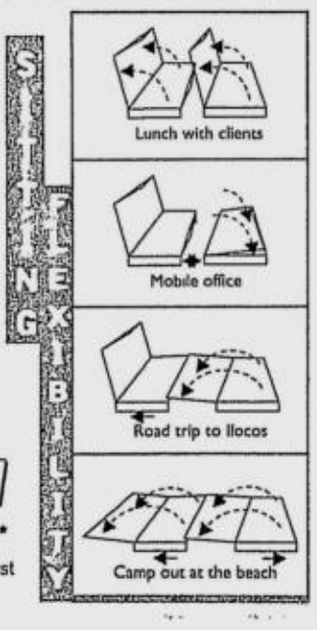

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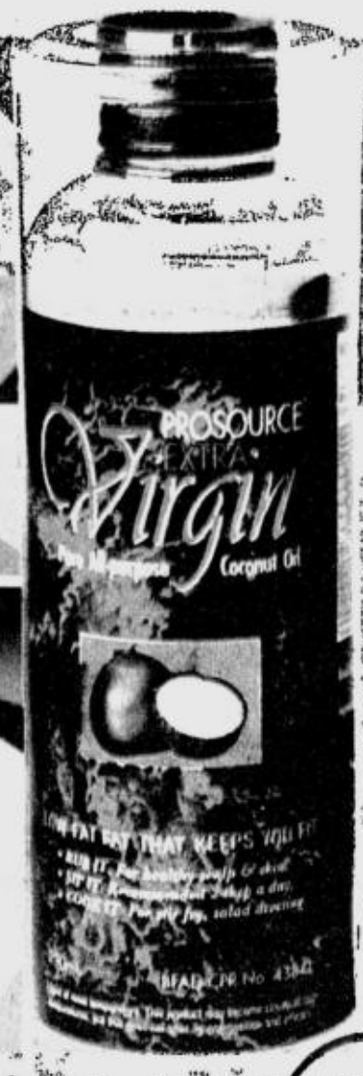

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Palace pins big hope on 'chopsuey' Senate

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr, Christine Avendaño and TJ Burgonio

WITH A SUPPOSEDLY MORE ACcommodating leader holding sway in a "chopsuey" Senate, Malacañang yesterday expressed confidence its P17-billion supplemental budget and P1.136-trillion 2007 budget would face smoother sailing in the chamber unlike the vexed 2006 appropriations bill.

"We are hopeful that with the new leadership in the Senate, both chambers of Congress would be able to get their act together for the sake of the people. We need to put flesh in our plans and Congress is a vital key to this goal," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a statement.

Sen. Manuel Villar on Monday took over as Senate President from Sen. Franklin Drilon who has been a thorn on the side of Malacañang for the past 12 months.

Malacañang is hoping it can get a fresh start in the Senate with Villar. Some Palace officials believe they would have a more "harmonious" relationship with Villar, claiming to be downright chummy with him.

More room to talk

"I think you have more room for talking and for cooperation," said Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor, adding that he and other Palace officials have "enough good relationship" with Villar.

He pointed out that Villar and several Malacañang executives—himself, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya—"were all part of one Congress in the past."

"We worked with each other before so we will be able to talk to each other," Defensor said.

Asked whether he saw fewer Senate inquiries into controversial issues under a Villar leadership, Defensor said he did not think so because conducting investigations remained part of the Senate's role.

"We will participate when we feel it's not a political witch hunt or efforts to destabilize the government. But if we see there is bias or malice in the investigations, we will also decide and act accordingly," he said.

Malacañang has virtually given up on the 2006 budget being passed and is settling for a supplemental budget of P15 billion for the internal revenue allotment of the local government units and P2 billion for preparations for the 2007 elections.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya said he had already broached the subject of the supplemental budget to Villar and the latter was "supportive."

"There is a big chance that it will be passed, it's incumbent on the part of any member of the Senate to give it a try," said Andaya.

Drilon said he was open to passing a supplemental budget for the IRA and the automation of elections.

"There is a need for it," he told reporters.

This year's IRA is supposed to be P166.5 million, or P14.8 billion higher than last year's P151.7 billion.

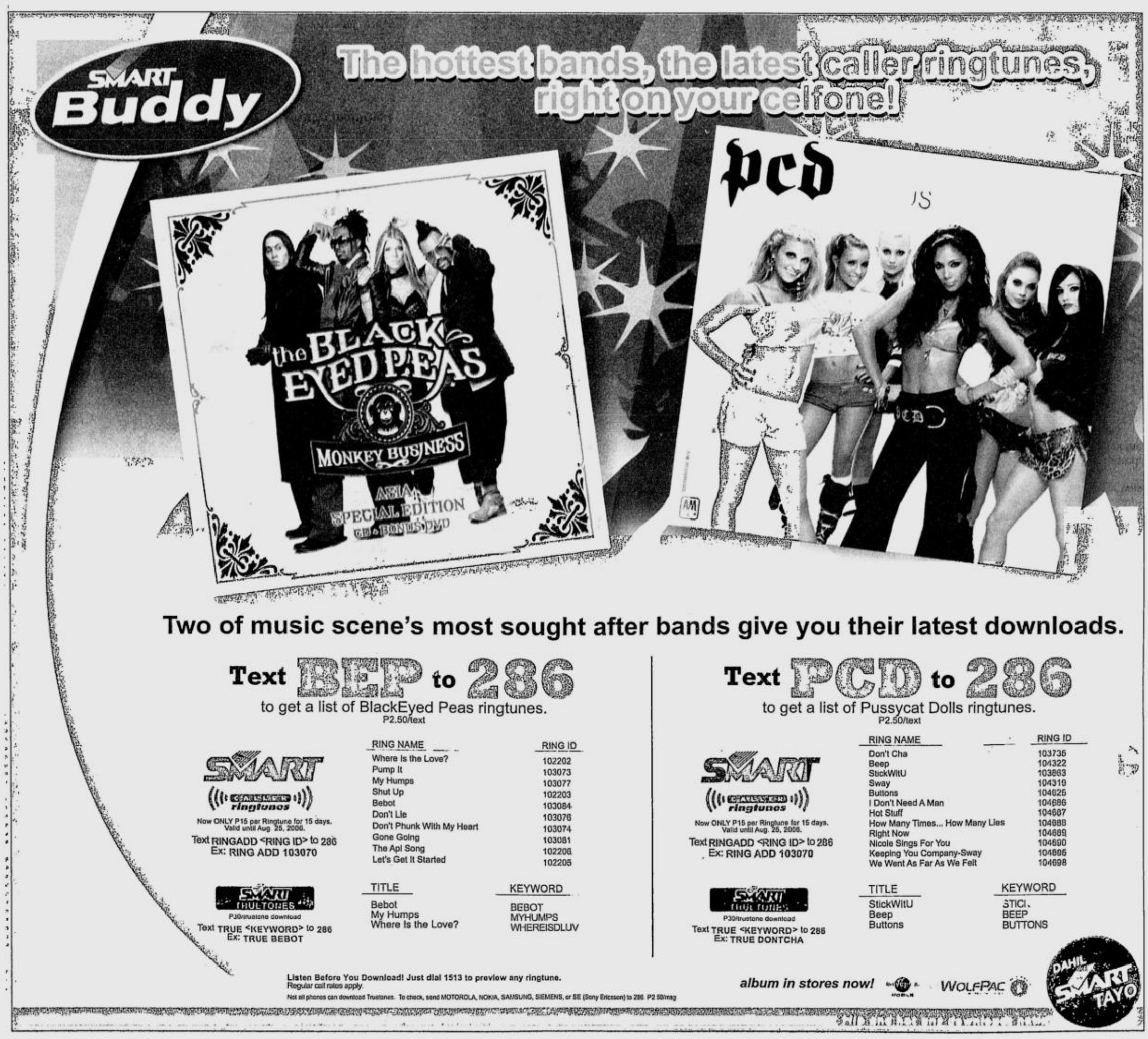
Senators meanwhile said Villar's accession did not affect the political configuration in the chamber.

Administration Sen. Ralph Recto said the the change only involved the post of Senate President.

Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan cited a Supreme Court ruling that said a senator's vote for a winning or losing candidate for the Senate's top post does not determine his membership in the majority or minority blocs.

He recalled that after Marcelo Fernan was elected Senate President in 1998, Senators Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Francisco Tatad asserted that they should be considered the "legal minority" since they did not vote for Fernan.

The SC ruled that their vote did not constitute their membership in the minority bloc, said Pangilinan, chair of the committee on rules.



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Pasig judge grants bail to Roldan for kidnap case

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

FORMER ACTOR AND CONgressman Dennis Roldan, who is accused of masterminding the kidnapping of a 3-year-old boy last year, was allowed to post bail yesterday after almost a year of being detained at the Pasig City Jail.

Judge Agnes Reyes-Carpio of the Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 261 approved a bail bond of P500,000 for the actor which, according to his lawyer, Karl Castillo, they would pay "as soon as possible." Kidnapping is a non-bailable offense.

Carpio, however, said that "from the evidence presented ... there is no clear proof that ... his guilt is strong." The judge, on the other hand, denied bail to Octavio Garces, Romeo Orcajada, Adrian Domingo, Noel San Andres and wife Rowena, Roldan's co-accused in the kidnapping case.

Roldan, whose real name is Mitchell Gumabao, said he was excited to make up for lost time with his wife and children.

"I want to be a pastor," he told the INQUIRER after yesterday's hearing, adding that his faith was renewed during his detention.

The father of the kidnap victim, however, was angry over the judge's decision. "I am furious. If Roldan really feels he is innocent, he should not hide during the next hearings," Roger Yu said in a phone interview. Suzette Wang, Roldan's alleged girlfriend and said to be his fellow mastermind, remains at large. *(See related data in What Went Before)*

The prosecution had presented at least 10 witnesses during the bail hearings, which went on for more than a year, including policemen who testified they saw Roldan in the safe houses where the boy was brought, and the boy's mother who claimed she had negotiated with Roldan for her son's release.

The defense presented only witnesses, Noel San Andres and Orcajada, to support his bail application. Both said they never saw Roldan or heard his name during the almost two weeks the kidnap victim was with them.

"The Court believes that, at this stage, the aggregate of evidence so far presented by the Prosecution is not strong to prove the complicity of Mitchell Gumabao in the subject offense," Carpio said in her decision.

Seven Police Anti-Crime and Emergency Response operatives had testified that they saw Roldan several times in the safe houses. But Carpio agreed with the defense which said the police officers had "no other competent and independent evidence" to corroborate their testimonies.

ON STRIKE!
Commuters were stranded for a few hours in Makati City yesterday as jeepney and tricycle drivers went on strike to protest rising fuel prices. REM ZAMORA

WHAT WENT BEFORE

DENNIS Roldan, former Quezon City congressman and actor, allegedly masterminded, along with his alleged girlfriend, Suzette Wang, the kidnapping of a 3-year-old child of a Chinese-Filipino couple in February 2005. Wang was supposedly a close friend of the victim's mother.

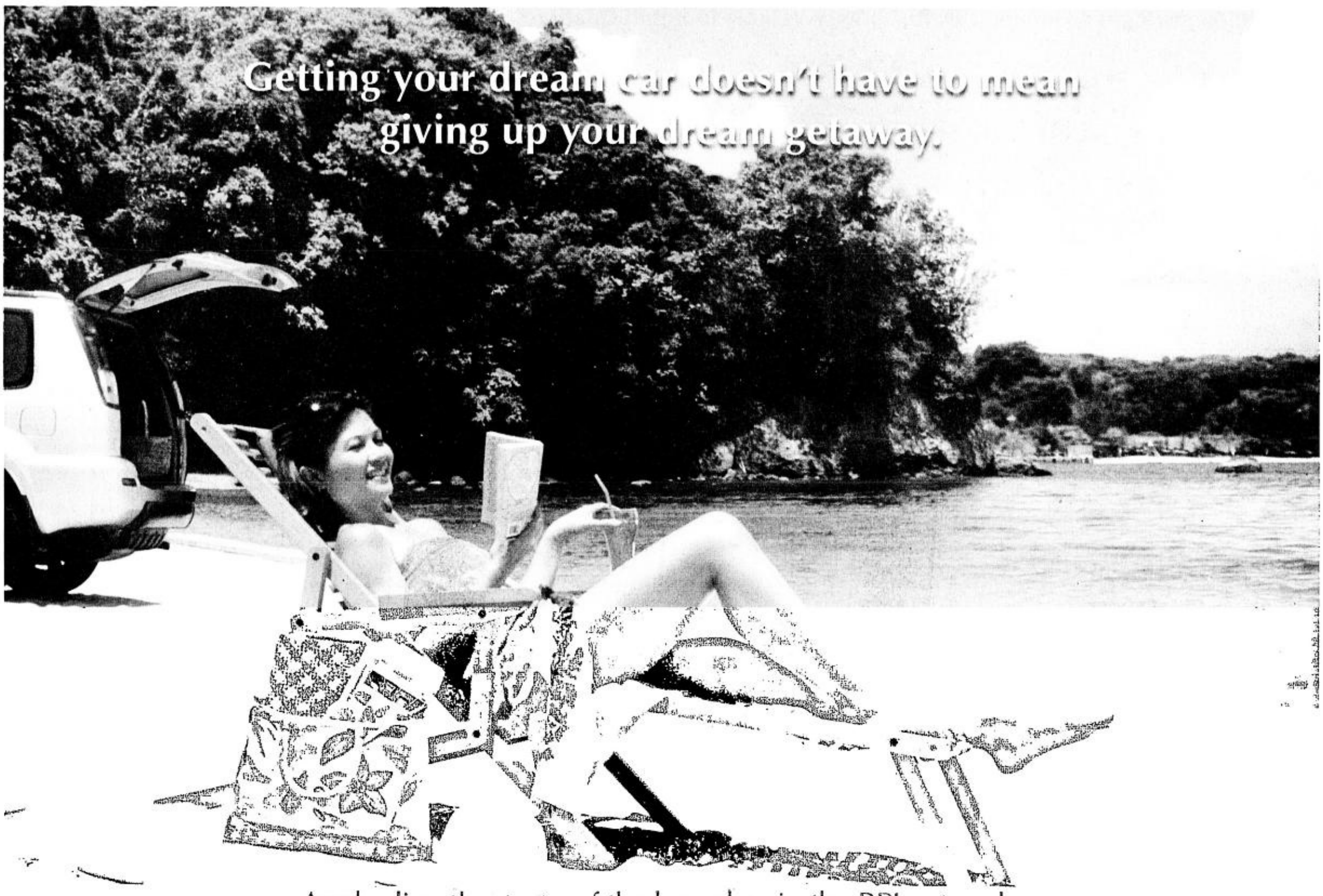
Along with Roldan and Wang, six others were also implicated in the abduction of the boy on Feb. 9 near ATC Tower, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, as he was on his way to school. The victim was later rescued by the police in the early morning of Feb. 20.

The group had allegedly asked for P250 million as ransom at the start of the negotiations, but later reduced their demand to P3 million.

The Department of Justice filed kidnap-for-ransom charges against Roldan on March 3, 2005. Wang and five other co-accused—Noel San Andres, Rowena San Andres, Romeo Orcajada, Octavio Garces and Adrian Domingo—were formally charged a month later.

They all entered a plea of not guilty during their arraignment in August. Roldan also immediately applied for bail. Wang, on the other hand, remains at large.

WHAT/ A20



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AMONG the 17 cities and municipalities in Metro Manila, Quezon City has the largest population (2.17 million) based on the latest data. It is followed by the City of Manila with 1.58 million residents and Caloocan City with 1.18 million persons. Pateros, on the other hand, has the smallest population with 57,407 persons. The National Capital Region has 9.93 million residents.
Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research

Riverside families moved to evacuation shelters

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THIRTY FAMILIES LIVING BESIDE beside the Marikina River were evacuated yesterday as heavy rains continued to fall on Luzon, including Metro Manila.

The rains also left Tumana Bridge, which connects Marikina to Quezon City, impassable to vehicles as of yesterday afternoon.

Earlier in the day, 20 families left their houses on Sitaw Street in Barangay Malanday as the water in a nearby creek continued to rise.

"The area is really flood-prone so we regularly monitor the creek especially during rainy days," barangay desk officer Mina Minor said.

She added that the residents affected by the floods, numbering 150 persons, were temporarily housed in a covered court in the Bulelak Area.

Rising waters

In the afternoon, another 10 families from Barangay Nangka were brought to the Nangka Elementary School, the city rescue office said.

As of yesterday morning, the water level in the Marikina River was already at 15.9 meters, rescue officer Michael Zurbano said.

For the Tumana Bridge to be passable, the water level should be between 11 and 12 meters.

In August 2005, the strong current in the river pushed an FX taxi off the bridge, sending it and the driver into the water.

The body of the 56-year-old driver was found three days after the incident, about a kilometer away from the bridge.

Zurbano said the rescue center had received a report that a 21-year-old man disappeared on Monday in the murky river while gathering *kangkong* (leafy greens) in Banaba, San Mateo which is adjacent to Marikina City.

The man's wife went to the rescue center yesterday to seek help in finding his body.

METROBRIEFS

Day robbery

A GASOLINE station lost P1.8 million to five robbers at around 7:30 a.m. on Monday in Ermita, Manila. According to PO3 Genaro Tan of the Manila Police District (MPD) Theft and Robbery Section, Ma. Cristina Cruz and her companion, employees of the Petron gasoline station at the corner of Marcelino Street and Taft Avenue, were on their way to the bank to deposit the money. They were blocked, however, by five motorcycle-riding men on Pedro Gil Street. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

4 men face murder raps

FOR GUNNING down two brothers out of jealousy over a woman, four men were charged with two counts of murder yesterday. Samanodin Maruhom, 25, and three men identified only as Abdul or Aloddin, Orak or Itlog and a certain Michael were charged with murder in the Quezon City prosecutor's office. The four were among six suspects in the killing of Rolando Coronel and his brother Reynaldo on June 28 that took place on Sarmiento Street, Barangay Sta. Monica, Novaliches. *DJ Yap*

What went before

From page A19

An eighth suspect, Albert Pagdanganan, had earlier executed an affidavit pinning the blame on Roldan and was thus excluded from the charges.

In the affidavit, Pagdanganan said they brought the boy to two separate safe houses in Quezon City and one in Tagaytay City. He also later testified during the court hearing that Roldan had wanted to kill the boy and had threatened the victim's mother that he would torture the boy if she did not give in to his demand.

The DOJ in April junked an appeal by Wang to drop the case against her, after claiming that the evidence implicating her in the kidnapping was weak. *Kate Pedroso, PDI Research*

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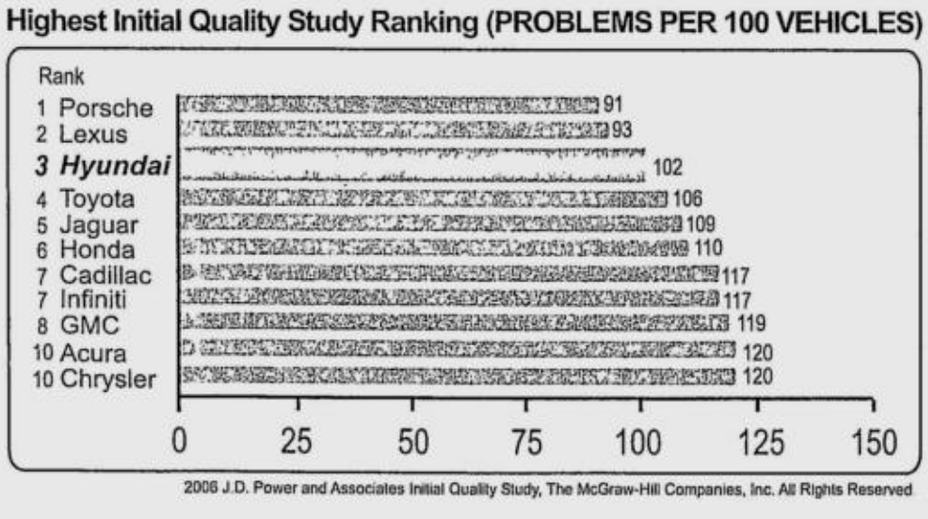

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Hyundai Sonata Wins Edmunds.com Inside Line Mid-Size Comparison Test, Beating Toyota Camry and Honda Accord in a 'Landslide'"

The all-new 2006 Hyundai Sonata beat Honda Accord and Toyota Camry, its primary competitors in the mid-size sedan segment, and took first place in an Edmunds.com Inside Line comparison test yesterday.

Edmunds.com reported, "In the end, it wasn't even close ... in the areas of performance and features, the Hyundai won in a landslide ... Bottom Line: With the 2006 Sonata, Hyundai convincingly beats the long-standing class leaders in nearly every important category."

"We were looking for the family sedan priced under $22,000 with the best combination of passenger accommodations, safety and luxury features, performance, overall quality and value," said John DiPietro, Road Test Editor at Edmunds.com Inside Line. "Taking all of these factors into account, the Hyundai Sonata came out on top."

2006 Sonatas began rolling off the assembly line of Hyundai's new manufacturing plant in Montgomery, Ala., in April. The all-new Sonata was designed specifically to meet the needs of the American consumer and is the product of three years of intensive collaborative development at Hyundai's global R&D operations, including those in Michigan and California. It is the first and only mid-size sedan sold in America to offer one of the industry's most effective and sophisticated safety technologies, Electronic Stability Control, as standard equipment.

Edmunds.com praised the all-new Sonata for its roomy interior (classified by the U.S. government as a "large car," a full class above Camry and Accord), smooth V6 engine, segment-leading standard safety technology, and strong value. "In the real world, the Sonata shines. The well-tuned suspension smothers the bumps and keeps its composure in turns without drama, and its tuning falls between the firm Accord and cushy Camry. There's plenty of power for effortless merging and passing, and the brakes are a strong ally in the daily grind. And let's not forget the standard stability control, unusual in the segment, and the huge 10-year/100,000-mile powertrain warranty."

Edmunds.com concluded, "With the Sonata handily dethroning the twin kings of the family sedan segment, Hyundai has shown that, beyond a doubt, it's ready to take a starring role on the automotive stage. Nice job, Hyundai."

Edmunds.com is a leading automotive Web site providing consumers with valuable information on the, industry's top vehicles. To read the full review, go to http://www.edmunds.com/insideline/do/Drives/Comparos/articleId=106434.

ADVT

World trade talks collapse after 5 years

GENEVA—GLOBAL FREE TRADE talks, billed as a once-in-a-generation chance to boost growth and ease poverty, collapsed on Monday after nearly five years of haggling and resurrecting them could take years.

The decision to halt the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Doha round came after trading powers failed in a last-ditch bid to overcome differences on reforming world farm trade, which lies at the heart of the round.

"Faced with this persistent impasse, I believe that the only course of action I can recommend is to suspend the negotiations across the board," WTO chief Pascal Lamy told the 149-state body.

Acknowledging suspension could turn into the effective death of the free trade negotiations, Lamy said it was up to WTO members to decide when they were ready to resume and that this could take "not a little bit of time."

The round, launched in the Qatari capital in 2001, stumbled from the start over how far rich nations would go to dismantle their huge farm subsidies and open up their markets.

Indian trade minister Kamal Nath, when asked how long the suspension could last, said: "Anywhere from months to years." "The round is not dead. I would say that it is definitely between intensive care and the crematorium," he said.

Fourteen hours of talks on Sunday between the so-called G6—the United States, the European Union, Brazil, Australia, Japan and India—yielded no breakthrough despite a threat from Lamy to call a halt without progress.

The European Union, Japan, Brazil and India suggested the blame lay with the United States. The EU and India said Washington had been demanding too high a price for cutting into the some $20 billion it spends annually on farm subsidies.

Accusing the United States of "stonewalling," EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson said: "Surely the richest and strongest nation in the world, with the highest standards of living, can afford to give as well as take."

But the United States was adamant neither the EU nor India had been prepared to offer the sort of access to their markets that Washington needs to make a deal on subsidies worthwhile.

It has said all along it preferred no deal to one that brought it no new business.

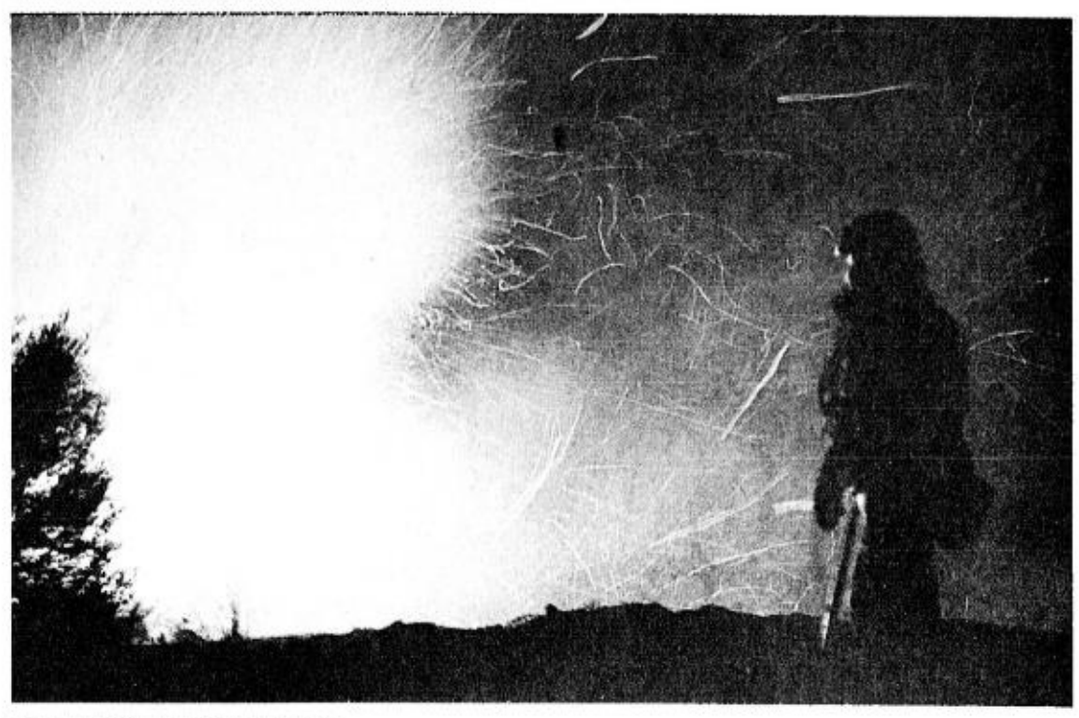
"Unfortunately as we went through the layers of loopholes ... we discovered that a couple of our trading partners were more interested in loopholes than they were in market access," said US Trade representative Susan Schwab.

Lamy warned that a "failure (of the round) would send out a strong negative signal for the future of the world economy and the danger of a resurgence of protectionism."

Despite the debacle, all members of the G6 said they remained committed to the multilateral trading system and to completing the Doha round, even if they could not say how or when the negotiations could be revived.

The crisis recalled a similar breakdown in 1990 during the previous round of free trade negotiations—the Uruguay Round.

That round, launched in 1986, was only finished in 1993. *Reuters*



CALIFORNIA WILDFIRE
A firefighter faces swirling embers while battling a fast-moving wildfire that has consumed more than 7,000 acres, 40 miles east of San Diego, California. REUTERS

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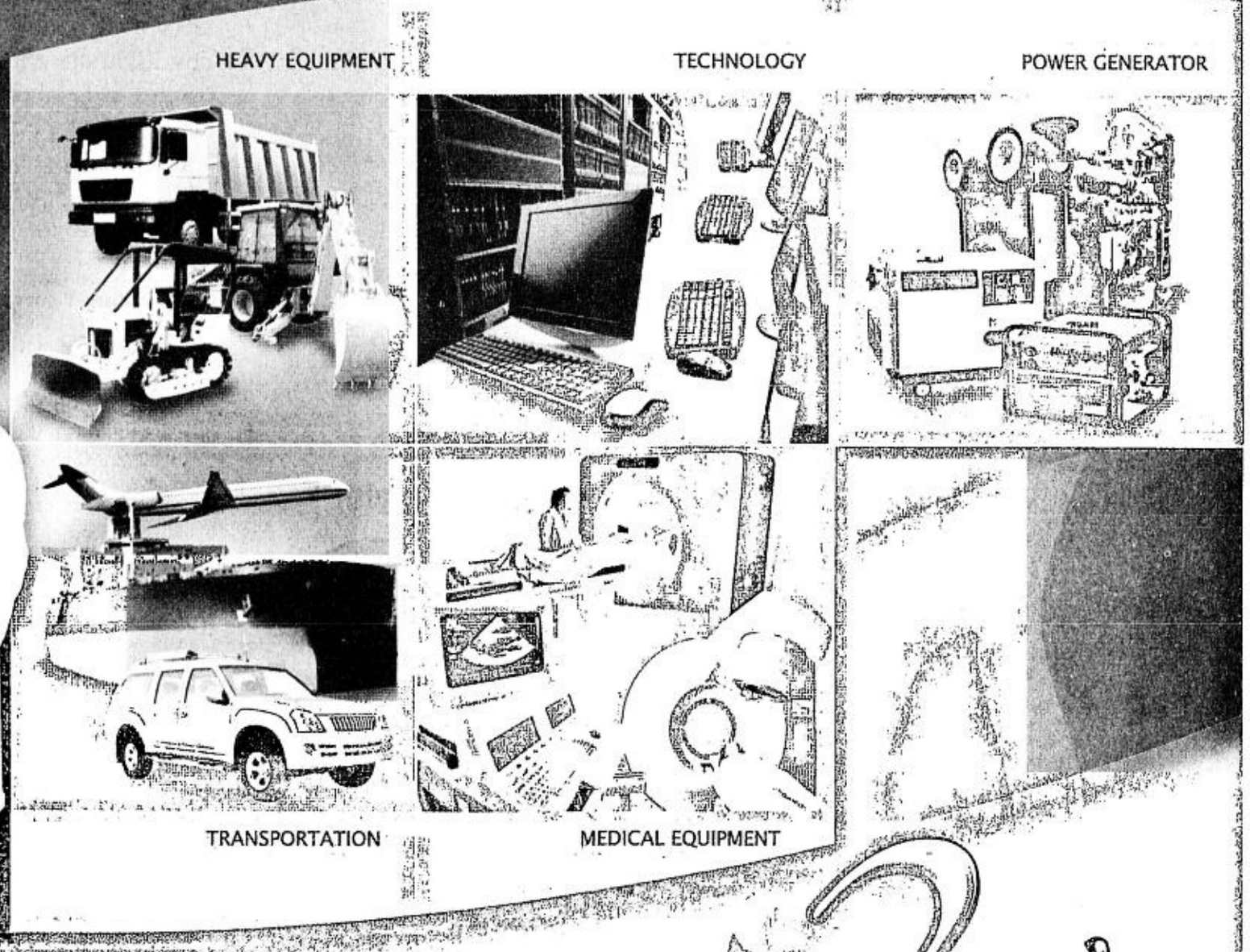

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George Church, Sr. Founder

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So what is it in Church's Chicken that gives it that to-die-for crrunch? The secret is in the cooking process. According to Wow Foods VP for Operations Lito Domingo, he and Operations Manager Armand Cavanes had to learn how to do it perfectly during their Atlanta training a few months back.

He says the ultimate key to achieving that perfect crrunch and taste is the freshness of the chicken, the right temperature for frying, and the right blend for marination.

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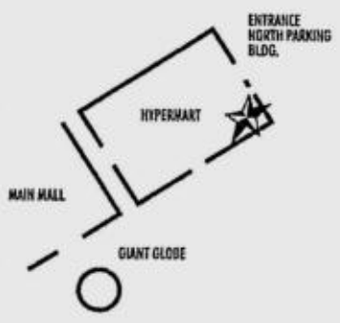

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A22 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

AN ARTILLERY UNIT trains its guns north of the border from Israel to Lebanon in the Israeli village of Fassuta. REUTERS

Despite Rice visit, prospects are dim for Lebanese truce

JERUSALEM—US SECRETARY of State Condoleezza Rice hold talks with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert on Tuesday on the conflict in Lebanon with little immediate prospect of a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah.

Amid mounting international concern at civilian casualties, Rice met Lebanese leaders in bomb-battered Beirut on Monday.

Israeli forces fought Hezbollah in south Lebanon and kept up two weeks of air strikes. Hezbollah fired more rockets into Israel.

An Israeli air strike on a Lebanese village overnight killed a family of seven, Lebanese security sources said on Tuesday.

Hezbollah said five of its guerrillas were killed in the past two days. Israel said two soldiers were killed on Monday.

A total of 390 people in Lebanon and 41 Israelis have been killed in the conflict, ignited by Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers on July 12.

Enduring place

In Beirut, Rice unveiled truce proposals similar to Israel's demand for Hezbollah to pull back from the border to allow an international force to deploy, Lebanese politicians said.

"Any peace is going to have to be based on enduring principles and not on temporary solutions," Rice told reporters in Jerusalem before dinner with Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni.

While saying she has no plan for Middle East shuttle diplomacy, Rice's schedule this week resembles just that. She headed to Jerusalem after her trip to Beirut and will also visit Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah.

Rice has made clear she is not seeking a quick ceasefire and that any solution should address the root causes of the conflict—for which Washington and Israel blame Hezbollah and its backers in Iran and Syria.

Israel's army, which has also waged a military campaign in Gaza since June 28 to recover a soldier seized by Palestinian militants, believed it may have a week to keep pounding Hezbollah before a deal was reached, security sources said.

Among the issues on the table at Rice's meetings are US demands Hezbollah withdraw away from Israel's border, the deployment of an international force alongside the Lebanese army in the area and the return of the Israeli soldiers.

Civilians suffering

Rice and Olmert were also expected to deal with what can be done to ease the suffering for civilians in Lebanon, which estimates almost one-fifth of its population has been displaced by Israeli bombing. Most of the dead are civilians.

The United States backs the idea of a humanitarian corridor to get help to the needy, an idea Israel says it could support.

"We did feel that Lebanon has been dealt a severe blow," said David Welch, Rice's senior aide on the Middle East.

One of the key sticking points for a ceasefire is the sequence of events for a deal.

Lebanese parliament speaker Nabih Berri, an ally of Hezbollah and close to Syria, told Rice in Beirut a ceasefire should come first, followed by an exchange of prisoners and then discussion of other issues, a Lebanese political source said.

Prime Minister Fouad Siniora, who has pleaded for an immediate ceasefire, was more open to Rice's proposal and discussed ways of developing her ideas, his office said. A U.S. official said Siniora also wanted a prisoner exchange first. *Reuters*

Hunger-striking Saddam in hospital

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—SADDAM HUSSEIN'S HALF brother argued with the chief judge Monday and accused a court employee of shaking down a relative for money as the trial entered its final phase without the hospitalized former president.

Barzan Ibrahim, a former intelligence chief, was the only one of the eight defendants in court when the trial resumed after a two-week break to continue hearing final summations.

After summations, the five-judge panel will adjourn to consider a verdict, which could include death by hanging for Saddam and two co-defendants, including Barzan.

Saddam, 69, remained hospitalized Monday, taking nutrition through a feeding tube, court spokesperson Raid Juhi said. The tube was inserted Sunday, the 17th day of Saddam's hunger strike. Juhi said Saddam was now in stable condition and would be in court Wednesday when the trial reconvenes.

Continuously refuses food

"His health is not in jeopardy," White House spokesperson Tony Snow said Monday in Washington.

Saddam and the seven others have been on trial since Oct. 19 for the deaths of Shiite Muslims in a crackdown on the town of Dujail, which was launched after an assassination attempt against Saddam in 1982.

Barzan had also been refusing food since July 7 to demand better security for defense lawyers, who have boycotted the hearings since last month's killing of Khamis al-Obeidi, the third member of the defense team slain since the trial began.

Despite more than two weeks without food, Barzan appeared no less combative than in previous sessions, when he was sometimes restrained by guards for rowdy behavior.

He told the chief judge, Raouf Abdel-Rahman, that he would not accept a court-appointed attorney and asked for more time to find another lawyer or to persuade the defense team to return. *AP*

UN appeals for $150M for Lebanon

BEIRUT—THE UNITED NATIONS APPEALED on Monday for $150 million in humanitarian aid to help people in Lebanon afflicted by nearly two weeks of conflict between Hezbollah and Israel.

UN emergency relief coordinator Jan Egeland said this was "the hour of greatest need for the Lebanese people."

"It is a situation that is glaringly in need of our assistance," Egeland said at the launch of the "Flash Appeal for Lebanon" in Beirut. In an initial appeal on Saturday, he had called for at least $100 million.

The revised sum would cover the needs of 800,000 people for three months, including food, health care, water and sanitation.

Israel has been launching daily air strikes on southern Lebanon, southern Beirut and other parts of the country. It is trying to stop Hezbollah from launching rockets into Israel.

The war has killed 377 in Lebanon and 39 Israelis.

Aid efforts have been hindered by Israel's destruction of civilian infrastructure including roads and bridges and its targeting of commercial trucks, a UN statement said.

"The ongoing hostilities continue to prevent access to affected populations and free movement of relief staff and goods," the statement said.

An estimated 700,000 people have fled their homes, with around 150,000 of those having crossed into Syria.

"We are particularly worried about the population in southern Lebanon and parts of the Bekaa valley," Egeland said.

"It's here where the civilians are now in the most difficult crossfire and it's from where they now are becoming displaced." *Reuters*

SPORTS

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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

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GROUP SWEEP: Efren "Bata" Reyes lives up to billing. ROMY HOMILLADA

$2-M POOL FREE-FOR-ALL

Bata, 10 other Pinoys enter Round 2 of IPT

FILIPINO CUE MASTERS LED by Hall of Famer Efren "Bata" Reyes are right on the pocket in the International Pool Tour 2006 North American 8-Ball Championships.

Reyes swept his four Group 9 matches Tuesday, a feat matched by Francisco "Django" Bustamante, Alex Pagulayan, Ronnie Alcano, Dennis Orcollo and Marlon Manalo as the Philippines sent 11 of its 13 bets to the next round of the $2-million event at the Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Reigning Singapore San Miguel Asian 9-ball Tour winner Gandy Valle and US-based Santos Sambajon also advanced despite posting 2-win, 2-loss records in Group 20 and 38, respectively.

Antonio Lining, who also swept his matches, Rodolfo "Boy Samson" Luat (3-1) and Edwin Montal (3-1) advanced earlier Friday.

Reyes, the 1999 World Pool champion and one of the tournament favorites, hammered former US Open champ Gabe Owen (8-3), Mary Kennisto (8-3) and James Walden (8-4), all of the US, and Luis Condo (8-1) of Australia to top Group 9.

Alcano beat Croatia's Ivica Putnik (8-7), Britain's Jimmy White (8-5), Australia's Quinten Hann (8-3) and Spain's David Alcaide (8-6) to rule Group 16.

The 27-year-old Orcollo, regarded as the Philippines' money-game king, topped Group 17 following victories over Wayne Catledge (8-1), John Kutcher (8-2)and Gary Abood (8-7), all of the US, and British lady cue artist Kelly Fisher (8-6).

Pagulayan, the 2004 Taiwan World Pool champion, triumphed in Group 4 by crushing Michael Massey (8-2), Tammie Jones (8-0) and Corey Harper (8-4) of the US and Goran Mladenovic (8-4) of Serbia and Montenegro.

Bustamante, the former world No.1, bested Americans Edwin Kelly (8-0) and Jim Weast (8-0), Gerda Hofstatter (8-1) of Canada and Andreas Koukiadakis (8-3) of Finland in Group 10.

Manalo topped Group 12 by whipping Dee Adkins (8-3), Robin Dodson (8-7), Richard Broumpton (8-5) and Joseph Minici (8-3).

Reyes, the top hope of Team Philippines being supported by billiards "godfather" Aristeo "Putch" Puyat, and the rest of those who made the second round are assured of $5,000 each.

The bad news is the Filipinos will cross paths in the next round, with the 52-year-old Reyes and Bustamante landing in Group 45. It's even worse in Group 48 where Orcollo, Alcano and Valle are bracketed. *Marlon Bernardino, contributor*

RP-Air21 rips China five, gains title shot

GAMES TUESDAY
7:30 p.m.—US vs Zhongshan (China)
9 p.m.—RP-Air21 vs Malaysia

ZHONGSHAN, CHINA—The Philippines-Air21 team bucked manpower shortage to beat Zhongsan Selection of China, 91-80, on Monday and forge a titular clash with Southeast Asian Games rival Malaysia in the inaugural Dr. Sun Yat Sen Cup international invitational basketball championship here.

Down to only seven players, the Filipinos weathered a determined stand by the taller and younger Chinese in the second half to complete the win at the Zhongsan gymnasium.

Despite missing the services of injured skipper Wynne Arboleda and Homer Se, the Filipinos led by as many as 11 points, 34-23, early in the second quarter behind the hot hands of Stephen Padilla, Bruce Dacia and KG Cañaleta.

Represented by its Australian-trained national team, Malaysia shocked newly crowned Eastcolight-Super Kung Sheung Cup champion Asian-American Sports Club of the US, 79-77, in the other encounter.

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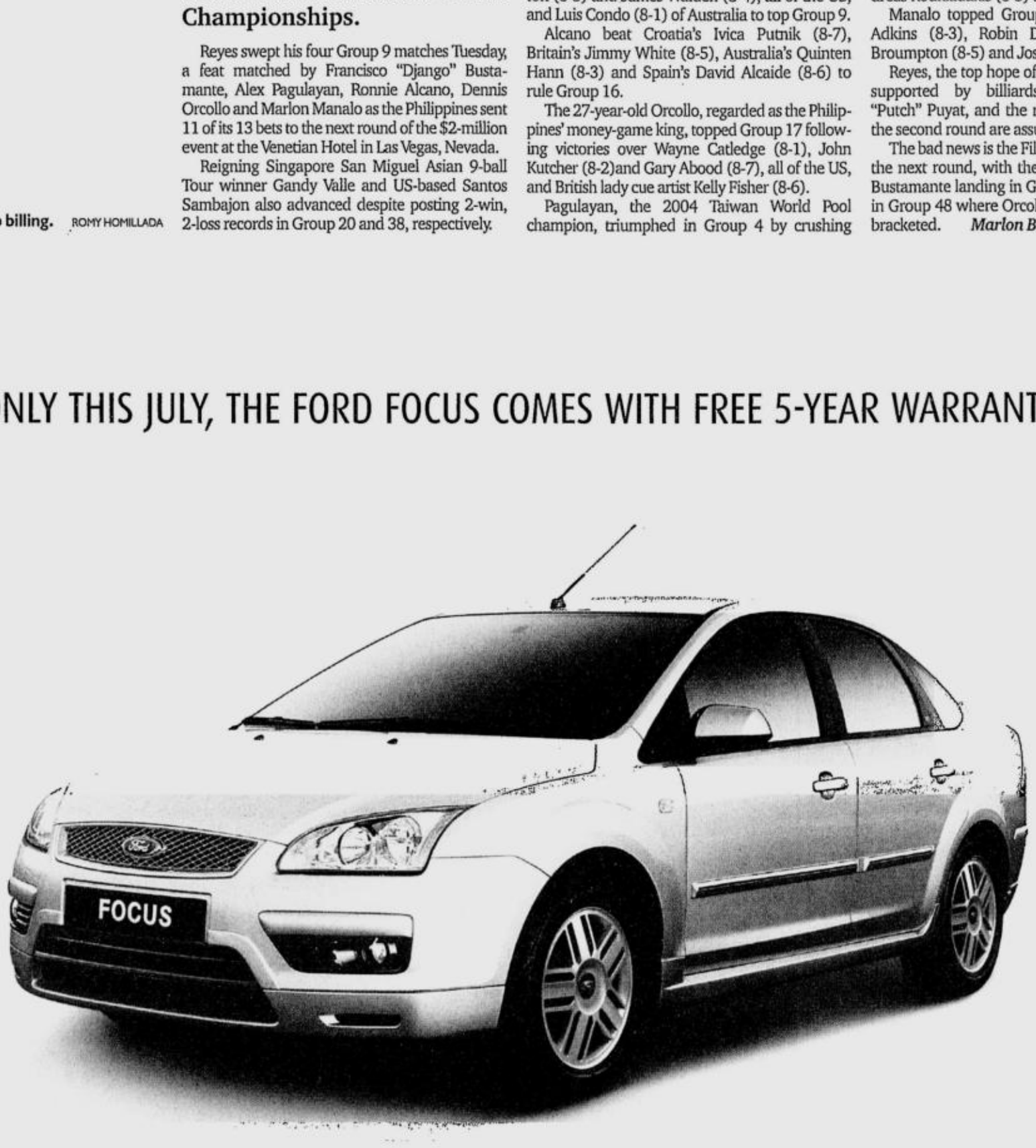

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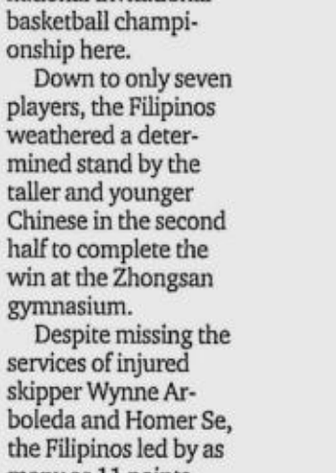

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Football's Romualdez: I'm n

ROMUALDEZ

By Musong R. Castillo

EARNING A CHANCE TO VOICE HIS SIDE OF A brewing controversy, Philippine Football Federation president Johnny Romualdez yesterday said he has nothing to hide and called on his detractors to unite for the sake of the sport.

Under fire from at least two disgruntled football association heads, Romualdez got his chance to answer accusations thrown at him when he guested at the PSA Forum at the Pantalan restaurant, the same venue where the National Capital Region and the Laguna Football Associations accused him of lack of transparency and mismanagement two weeks ago.

Romualdez, who appeared together with PFF executive director Tony Chua, opened up by saying that there is "a well-organized and well-funded smear campaign against the PFF."

"*Magnanakaw ba ako* (Am I a thief?)" Romualdez asked. "*Wala kaming tinatago* (we are not hiding anything). There were 20 years of [President Ferdinand] Marcos [rule] and no one has accused me of anything."

The NCR and Laguna FAs blasted Romualdez over discrepancies in the spending of PFF money. When both associations tried to conduct an audit, they were barred from doing so because, according to the PFF, "they lacked legal personality to do so."

Romualdez, who assumed the top PFF post 2003, still refuses to approve an "unconditional a dit," saying that "they have a right [to audit] but should be done under our (PFF) own terms."

He also defended his decision to keep former L guna president Ed Magalona as PFF adviser despi suspending him for unsportsmanlike conduct. Ma alona allegedly went after a football player with knife in an altercation a couple of years back.

"Yes, he (Magalona) was suspended, but as pre dent of the LFA," Romualdez said. "The suspensi was shortened and we needed him in the PFF."

But Jose Vito Borromeo, the NCRFA preside who gave his reactions after the Forum sponsored l

Papa Jun never a jinx

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

WE BRAVED THE brewing storm last Sunday afternoon to be at the Makati Medical Center, where the champion Purefoods Chunkee Giants were scheduled to visit teammate Eugene Tejada.

Although Eugene was allowed by his physicians—Dr. Marjorie Oropillo, spine specialist and Dr. David Cabatan, surgeon—to watch Game 5 at the Araneta Coliseum, his request to return to the venue for Game 6 was turned down.

Eugene had wanted to catch the championship moment, but when his doctors asked him if he wanted to risk another spine operation, he decided to watch the game on TV from his bed.

"*Baka daw mabigla*, his doctors cautioned. One day apart *lang kasi yung* two games. But he was allowed to hear Mass with his teammates at the San Miguel Complex Tuesday afternoon," Eugene's dad Danny related. A big victory celebration was scheduled at the same venue at 6 p.m.

* * *

I learned from Danny that Eugene's condition had suddenly taken a turn for the better since we last talked.

He said the cager can now sit up for hours without getting dizzy. He has also regained sensation in his legs and is now able to move them.

"He was in such high spirits while at the Araneta he even signed autographs and went with his teammates to the dugout at halftime and after the game which they lost to Red Bull," Danny said.

"With the entire team downcast, Eugene advised them to cheer up, since there were still two games left."

* * *

The Giants came to the hospital last Sunday in full force, led by the trio of PBA governor Rene Pardo, team manager Alvin Patrimonio and head coach Ryan Gregorio.

The group sat around Eugene's bed and chatted with him for a full hour.

Mang Pards said Eugene is still part of the team, although his contract is expiring this July.

"He is entitled to a monthly salary and all the bonuses, just like the rest of his teammates. *Tuluy-tuloy ang kanyang kontrata* indefinitely. Those are the instructions of SMC president Ramon Ang," Mang Pards said.

* * *

Jun Limpot, fondly called "Papa J" by his teammates, waited 13 long years for a taste of a PBA championship.

The title had been so elusive to the veteran cager, he had become the butt of jokes. Branding him a jinx, people said woe to the team that he played for.

In the last conference, everyone was praying for the "jinx" to be broken, including some Red Bull fans, for Jun's sake.

He was not getting any younger and his friends didn't want him to retire without at least one title tucked under his belt. Jun was well-liked by the press, and practically everybody else.

"I'm not the type of person who believes these things [jinx], so I never took those digs seriously. I never thought of myself as a jinx," Jun said.

However, he could no longer ignore the loud, persistent buzz when Purefoods lost to Red Bull in the first conference.

* * *

Leading by 7 points with 39 seconds to go before the final buzzer in Game 6 of the recent Finals, Jun stood trembling as he prepared for the first of two charity attempts.

"As soon as the realization that we were going to be champion hit me, I shook all over. I missed the first shot because my hands were shaking," said Jun, who immediately got back his bearings to convert his second attempt.

"I can't describe the euphoria of my first championship. It's out of this world. It's pure magic, something I had never before felt in my life," said Jun who continuously pinched and slapped his forearm during the interview.

"What is that for?" I asked.

"Just making sure I'm not dreaming."

Sculptor's gift of love to ring idol

By Cedelf P. Tupas
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—HE CONSIDERS this one his most-prized masterpiece and was selling it for P200,000. But for his inspiration, it was a freebie.

Local sculptor Herminio "Hermie" Aurelio got his wish Tuesday when he turned over the life-size statue he made of Manny Pacquiao to the Filipino ring idol himself.

"It's a dream come true for me," the gray-haired Aurelio, 67, told the INQUIRER.

On top of his regular sculpting jobs, Aurelio said he worked on the concrete statue—coated with gold paint—on the side for more than a year starting in late 2004.

It was ready by the time Pacquiao knocked out Mexico's Erik Morales in January, Aurelio said.

Pacquiao's "barber's hair-cut" and his mustache were perfectly crafted in the statue that showed the boxing hero in a fighting stance.

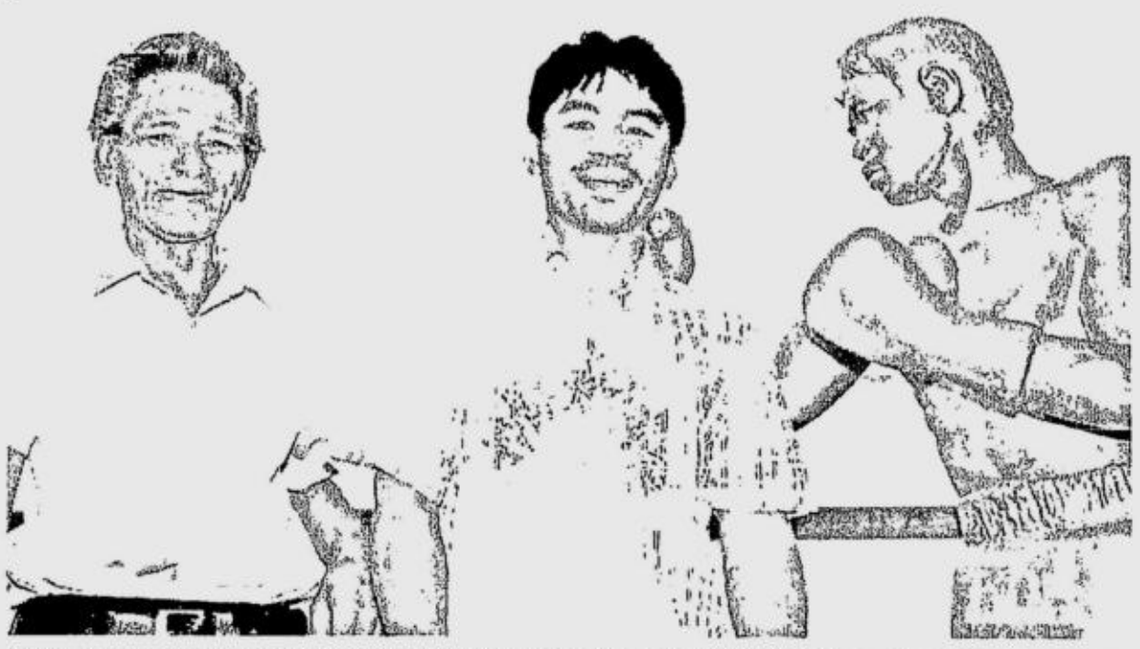
Aurelio said he had wanted Pacquiao to give his work personally.

But with Pacquiao unable to come to Negros Occidental immediately after the fight against Morales, Aurelio said he displayed the statue for five months in front of his store with a price tag of P200,000.

"There were no buyers but I'm more than happy to give this [statue] to him," said Aurelio, who sat beside Pacquiao in a press conference at the Casino Filipino here.

Himamaylan Mayor Carminia Bascon facilitated the transport of the statue to Bacolod City, where Aurelio met Pacquiao for the first time yesterday.

Pacquiao expressed elation over Aurelio's gesture and said he would bring the statue home to General Santos City.


HERMINIO Aurelio (left) savors turning over the golden statue to Manny Pacquiao. ANDY ALVAREZ/ PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

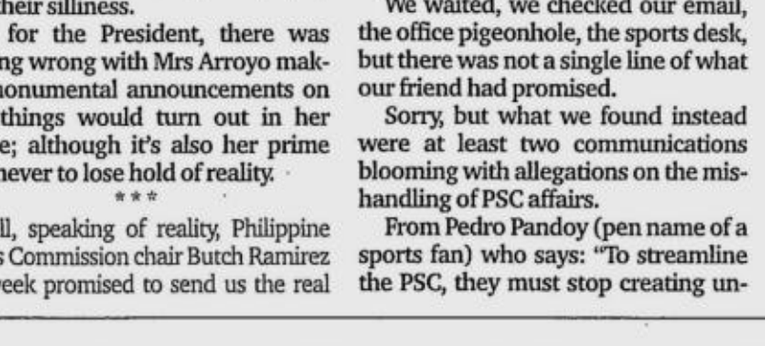
Petron beach spikers pray for dry weather

ORGANIZERS OF THE PETRON Ladies Beach volleyball tournament are looking forward to a fine weather on Friday when the event's third leg gets going at the Clearwater Country Club in Clark Field, Pampanga.

"Hopefully by Friday OK *na yung* weather," said Tisha Abundo, who is in-charge of the four-leg event, during the PSA Forum at the Pantalan Restaurant yesterday.

Ateneo's Misha Quimpo and Patricia Taganas, among the 20 players who attended the forum, said that playing in wet conditions is difficult.

The leg's champion pair will get P10,000 while the runners-up will receive P5,000. The PUP pair of Kristia Ricana and Kathy Sotejo captured the second leg last summer.


PLAYERS seeing action in the Clark tourney include (from left) Patti Taganas, Misha Quimpo, Sheryl Laborte, Averil Paje and Bea Pascual. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Lightnin Tabuen

FLORIDA—MIGUEL TAB what he could to put hin tention for the boys 10-1 sion title in the Optimist I golf championship Mond

The weather, though, in his plans.

With a one under card holes, Tabuena was alread lead with Guillermo Perrei putting for birdie on the 12 final round when play was second time due to lightnin

After an announcement organizers in the clubhouse

NGAP consulta

SEC. LEANDRO MENDOZA, Association of the Philippine meeting with public and priv a.m. tomorrow at the Wack W unify all golf clubs in the cou development of golf in the co doza, the transportation sec

PCC anniversar

ANOTHER BANNER CROWD the second round of the PCC Sagupaan Complexor 3000 day and 16 qualified for the Ynares, Roger Segismundo, Butchoy Olano, Pepito Ngo. Participants who will score t will be held on Friday. For det

Motorcycle Fes

ROLIGON MEGA COCKPIT'S M confirmed entries listed as of y Inc. and Thunderbird Enertone fee of P6,600. Host Rolly Ligon fastest win champions. Meanw the Banahaw 5-stag derby on A be categorized as young, regul

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Straight Forward (3), Sol Invitus (6), Suavetiger (4), Golden Music (7), Cloudness (5)

Race 2—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Loveko To (2), Scarab (3), Be My Pride (6), My Lady Hannah (7), My Rabbonis (12)

Race 3—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—White Princess (8), Hidalgo (3), Ferrarione (12), West N Wild (5), Prince Valiant (2)

Race 4—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Modern Classic (2), Magic Dancer (7), Awesome Power (1), Kiwi Rose (11), Ingay Ingay (5)

Race 5—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—My Lucky One (2), I Don't Dance (3), Naglalabyog (12), Perfect Time (11), Parrot Moe (4)

Race 6—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Kim Possible (11), Classy Pages (10), Reporter (5), Paminsanminsan (1), Top Of D'Line (4)

Race 7—(Penta/Ort/Tri)—Hard Way (14), Pirouette (3), Sir Benjo (12), Miss Bobon (10), Dynamic Jason (6)

Race 8—(Super 6/Ort/Tri)—Seven Lakes (11), Gutsy (9), Wild Orphan (13), Empire Lady (2), Hello Africa

Applause for GMA, questions for PSC c

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-Arroyo has succeeded in showing she had no fear of flying whatsoever.

Out at the Batasang Pambansa on Monday, she was a rich, little girl reading what could be her Christmas super wish list.

That she did not turn giddy as she flew way up to the sky, to tell her captive audience a mountain of inventions and dreams, should be greatly credited to her upbringing.

Daughter of a one-time *zarzuelista*, GMA was sweetly theatrical in what was easily the greatest performance of her reign.

In fact, someone suggested Mrs Arroyo must've been reading Carlos Castaneda's classic on hallucination, "A Separate Reality," for her to be both effective and entertaining in her fantastic Sona speech.

OK, there will be more roads all over the country, the President promised.

But out in our chaotic streets, motorists and pedestrians often resemble savages as they go their wild ways in a bid to make both ends meet.

Yes, a people's desperation and hunger could easily be measured by their behavior, even as cops try to make an extra peso here and there by refusing to implement the necessary road rules.

* * *

Meanwhile, our favorite mayors, hungering this early for yet another term, make costly advertisements of their projects—as though these were not part of their tasks—thereby making useless announcements at people's expense.

These self-serving billboards, insults to public intelligence obscenely strewn in our midst, should be classified as another form of pornography with their silliness.

As for the President, there was nothing wrong with Mrs Arroyo making monumental announcements on how things would turn out in her tenure; although it's also her prime duty never to lose hold of reality.

* * *

Well, speaking of reality, Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Ramirez last week promised to send us the real score on the reported food poisoning that had supposedly victimized national athletes who had called on him for necessary allowances.

Ramirez personally called your reporter here to assure he would be sending a reply to the allegations—immediately.

* * *

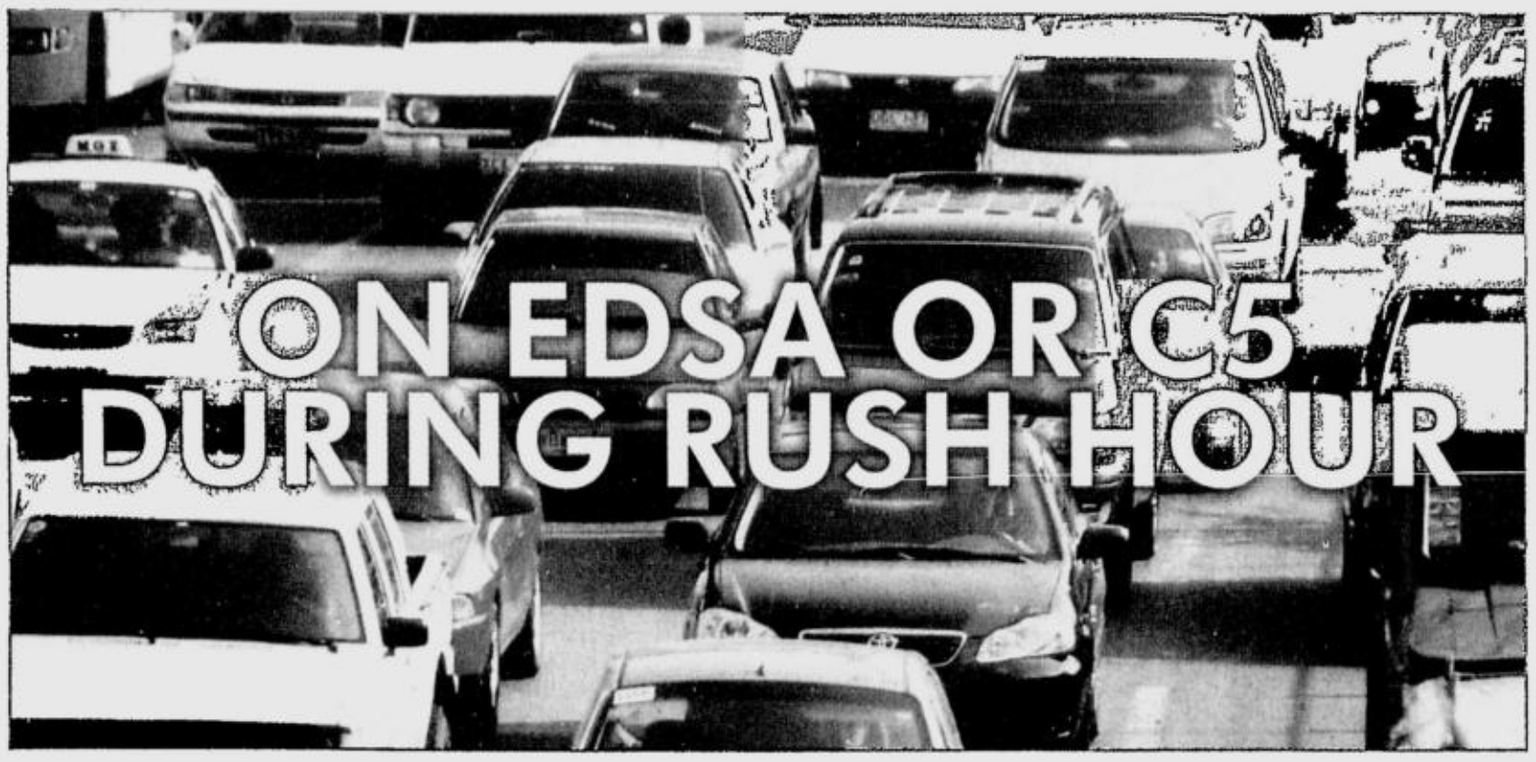
We waited, we checked our email, the office pigeonhole, the sports desk, but there was not a single line of what our friend had promised.

Sorry, but what we found instead were at least two communications blooming with allegations on the mishandling of PSC affairs.

From Pedro Pandoy (pen name of a sports fan) who says: "To streamline the PSC, they must stop creating unnecessary offices to justify sive number of personnel tual job order staff."

He then ticks off the questions:

1. Why have a travel bur the job can easily be outso serviced by quality travel ag
2. Why do you have 4 lo employees) within the Of Chairman, two desks apart a simple letter request befo gets to the secretary of the again records the simple le
3. Why have an NSA Aff when PSC's primary conc NSA in charge of various sp
4. Why have 5 people i copying unit?
5. Why have venue ma each building that are no generating?
6. Why do you have ma tants (or political accommo
7. Why not rid the PSC necessary "employees" so t (from this move) could su training pool athletes?



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ot a thief

Red Bull, Pagcor and Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, said that the act of keeping Magalona—and paying him—was a violation of Fifa and PFF by-laws.

Romualdez also took shots at Jun Pacificador, the present Laguna president, who he said was sore at the PFF after Pacificador's daughter was not included in the women's team that played in the Southeast Asian Games last year.

The Philippines recently fell to 44th out of 45 countries in the Asian rankings and 192nd out of 196 in the world. "*May konting problema ang* (There's something wrong with) Fifa rankings," Romualdez offered. "And we are there (low rankings) because we choose the competitions we join in.

ng strikes down a's golf hopes

JENA DID self in con- years divi- ternational rvened with through 11 tied for the of Chile and hole of the alled for the as made by everting the tournament to 36 holes due to the inclement weather, Tabuena bowed his head and was almost in tears, frustrated over his lost chance.

Tabuena settled for third place in his division, behind winner Zachary Martin, who beat Perreira for the title in a playoff.

Debbie de Villa was also denied of playing the third round in the girls 14-15 years category.

De Villa scored a 72 and wound up two shots behind two Thai players who went on to dispute the crown via a playoff.

SPORTSWATCH

ive meeting tomorrow

EWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL GOLF . is set to tee off his two-year term with a consultative te golf clubs in the country. The meeting, to be held at 9 Vack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City, aims to try. "Paramount to the success of NGAP in pursuing the untry is the active participation of golf clubs," said Mentary. Call 525-6987 or 524-5160 for details.

derby round 2 today

S EXPECTED AT PASAY CITY COCKPIT TODAY WHEN 20th Anniversary 5-cock derby blasts off at 4 p.m. with s sponsor. A total of 100 participants saw action on Monal round with two wins each. Among them were Gov. Ito Jodie and Mamad Villarubio, Danny Ty, Terry Santos, ony Oppen, Tito Reyes, Roger Zagala and D. Teodoco. o points today will get P10,000 each. The 3-cock finals uls, call 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750.

val lures 150 entries

OTORCYCLE FESTIVAL 4–COCK DERBY, WITH OVER 150 sterday, unfolds on Aug. 1, 3 and 5. Backed by Lakpue Drug the derby offers a guaranteed prize of P1 million for an entry said that four brand-new motorcycles will be given to the ule, screening of stags started last July 22 in connection with g. 22 at Roligon, according to host Eddie Sioson. Stags will and maximum. For details, call 851-2275 or 833-1638

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* * *

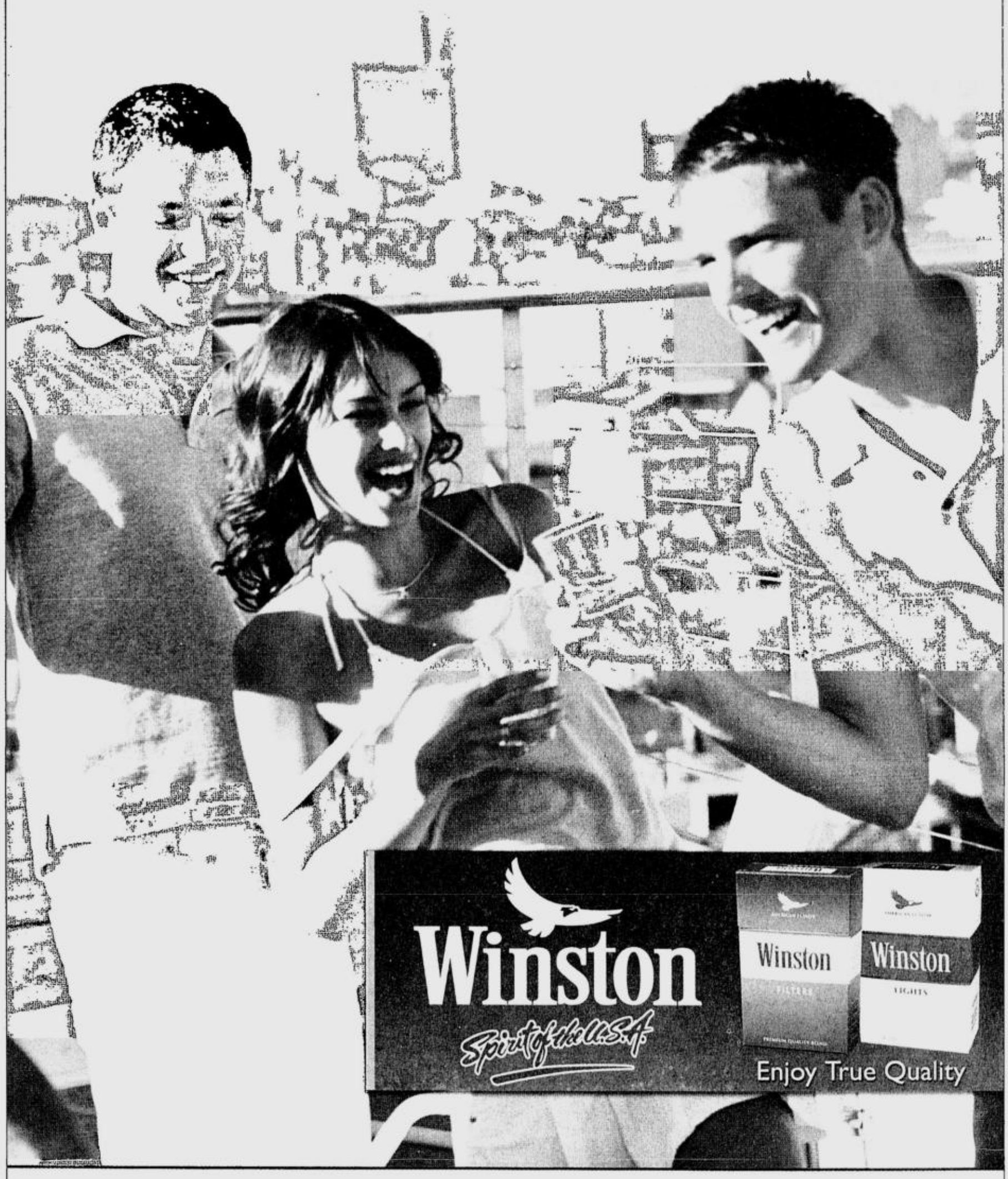
From Nestor Camacho, RPO Reg. 12/PLLO Technical Assistant, who has sent a letter to President Arroyo, portion of which we reprint here:

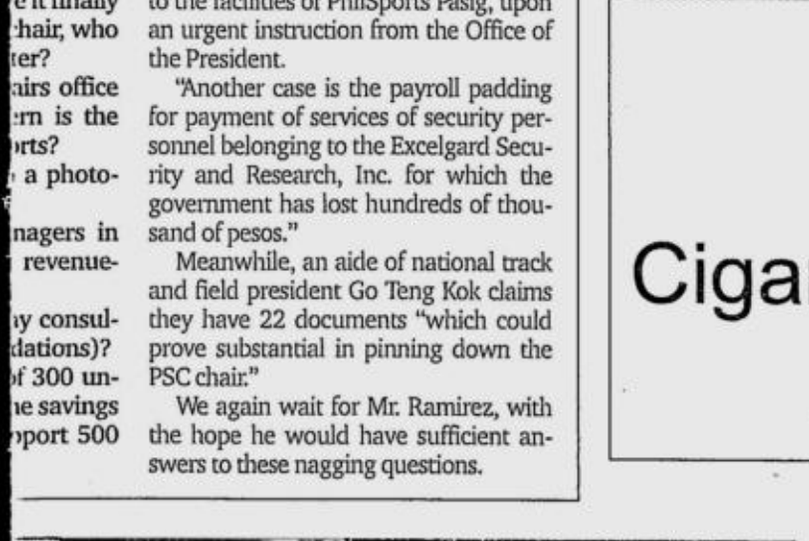
"Brent International School authorities have accused PSC Chair William Ramirez of demanding P10 million as advance rental for 16 months, the money of which would be allegedly used to "fast track the various projects relating to the facilities of PhilSports Pasig, upon an urgent instruction from the Office of the President.

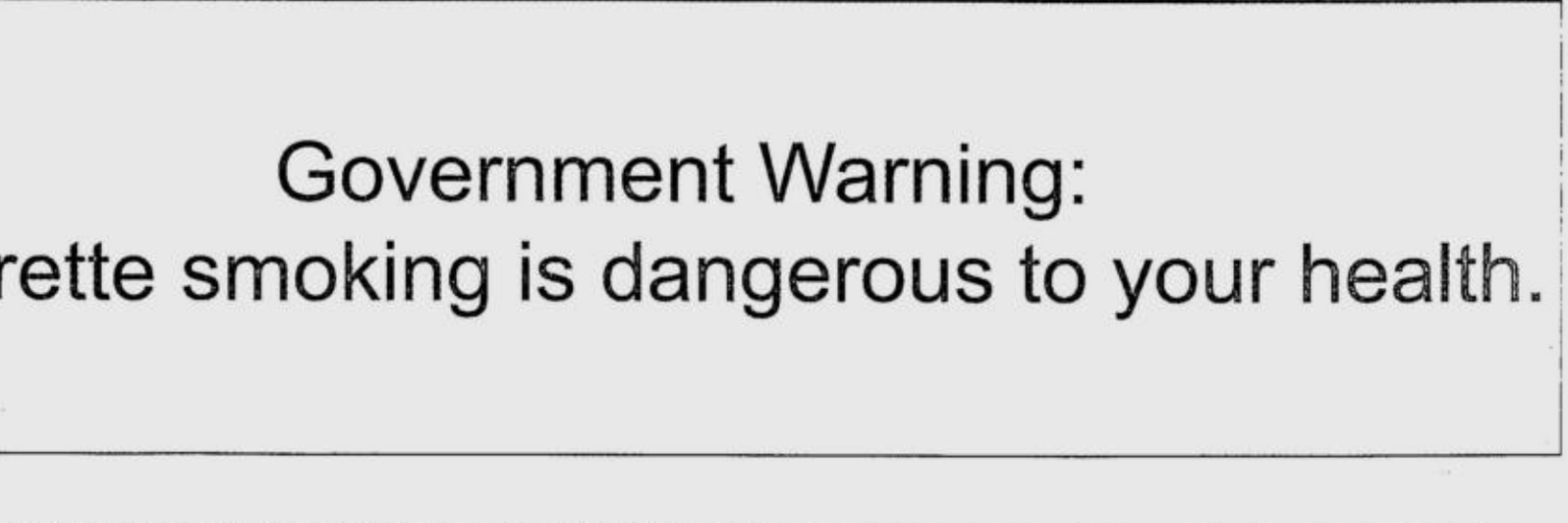
"Another case is the payroll padding for payment of services of security personnel belonging to the Excelgard Security and Research, Inc. for which the government has lost hundreds of thousand of pesos."

Meanwhile, an aide of national track and field president Go Teng Kok claims they have 22 documents "which could prove substantial in pinning down the PSC chair."

We again wait for Mr. Ramirez, with the hope he would have sufficient answers to these nagging questions.







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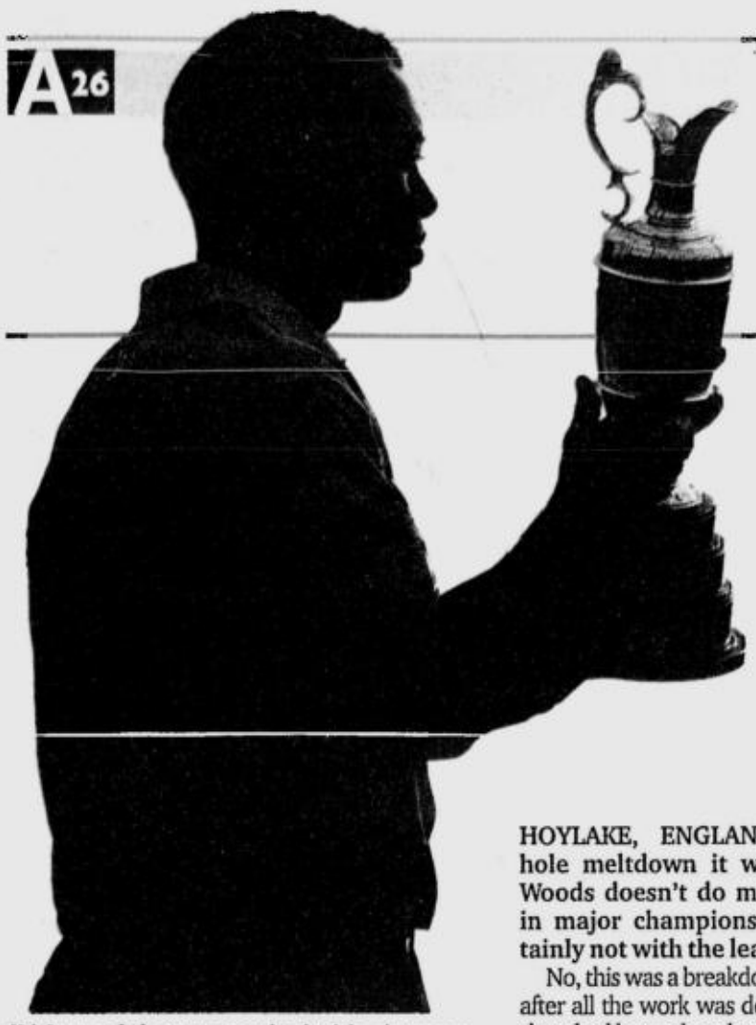
SPORTS



IN A mood that was marked with a lot more solemnity than his previous conquests, Tiger Woods basks in the afterglow of his latest major golfing triumph. AFP

Wang tears knee ligament

BEIJING—CHINESE BASKETBALL STAR WANG Zhizhi's world championship preparations have been disrupted with a knee ligament tear that is expected to see him sidelined for up to three weeks, state press said Tuesday. The 7-foot-1 center injured his knee during a 76-57 loss to France in a warm-up match on Sunday, Xinhua news agency said. Wang is expected to recover in time for the World Basketball Championships, which begin on Aug. 19 in Japan, but he is likely to miss a warm up match against the United States in China on Aug. 7. Wang, who refused to play for the national side during a four-year stint in the NBA, returned to national duty this year and is expected to team with Houston Rockets center Yao Ming at the worlds. *AFP*

AFTER DAD'S DEATH

Tiger goes on burning bright

HOYLAKE, ENGLAND—A FINAL-hole meltdown it was not. Tiger Woods doesn't do meltdowns, not in major championships and certainly not with the lead.

No, this was a breakdown, and it came after all the work was done, after all the shots had been played, after all the memories flashed through his mind again.

There was Woods, the most automated and emotionless of golfers, sobbing uncontrollably.

Right there on the 18th green at Royal Liverpool, this most private of people, letting it all out in front of thousands of cheering spectators and millions more on television.

Woods, 30, wanted the 135th Open Championship, perhaps more than any of the previous 10 major titles he had claimed. This was the first one without his father, Earl, who died May 3.

"At that moment, it just came pouring out," said Woods, who first cried in the arms of his longtime caddie Steve Williams, then again with his wife, Elin. "All of the things that my father has meant to me and the game of golf, and I just wish he could have seen it one more time.

"I was pretty bummed out after not winning the Masters, because I knew that was the last major he was ever going to see. So that one hurt a little bit. And then to get this one it's just unfortunate that he wasn't here to see it."

No doubt, Earl Woods would have been proud of his son's victory, one achieved in unconventional fashion at Hoylake, where Woods shot a final-round 67 to win by two strokes over Chris DiMarco and claim his third Claret Jug.

It was Woods' 11th major title, tying him with Walter Hagen for second on the all-time professional major list, seven behind Jack Nicklaus. The win, worth more than $1.3-million, was the 49th of his PGA Tour career.

The victory came a month after he had missed the cut in a major for the first time in his professional career at the US Open. It was just his third tournament since his father's death.

"Competing against a guy like Tiger for our generation of players is really tough," said Ernie Els, who began the day just a shot behind Woods, tied him through five holes, but finished third, five strokes back.

Woods finished at 270, 18 under par, just one off his tournament record set six years ago. Chris DiMarco, who was also playing with a heavy heart after the death of his mother, Norma, three weeks ago, applied the most pressure. He shot 68, the only challenger to break 70.

"He's got an uncanny ability, when somebody gets close to him, to just turn it up another level," DiMarco said.

Woods allowed himself a chance to enjoy the walk after his approach to the final green. And that's when it hit him, again, that his dad would not be there for the celebration.

The subject came up during Woods' victory speech, his eyes moistening once more. They presented him as the Champion Golfer of the Year, the title bestowed upon the winner of the Open.

About then, it was difficult not to think about what Earl Woods always said: that his son might one day be the champion golfer of all time. *NYT News Service*

Jockey does a 'Zidane' –to a horse

LONDON—JOCKEY PAUL O'NEILL WILL be investigated by the sport's governing body after television replays showed him head-butting his horse City Affair on Monday.

The Horseracing Regulatory Authority made the decision to hold an inquiry after reviewing TV footage from the incident at the Stratford races on Sunday.

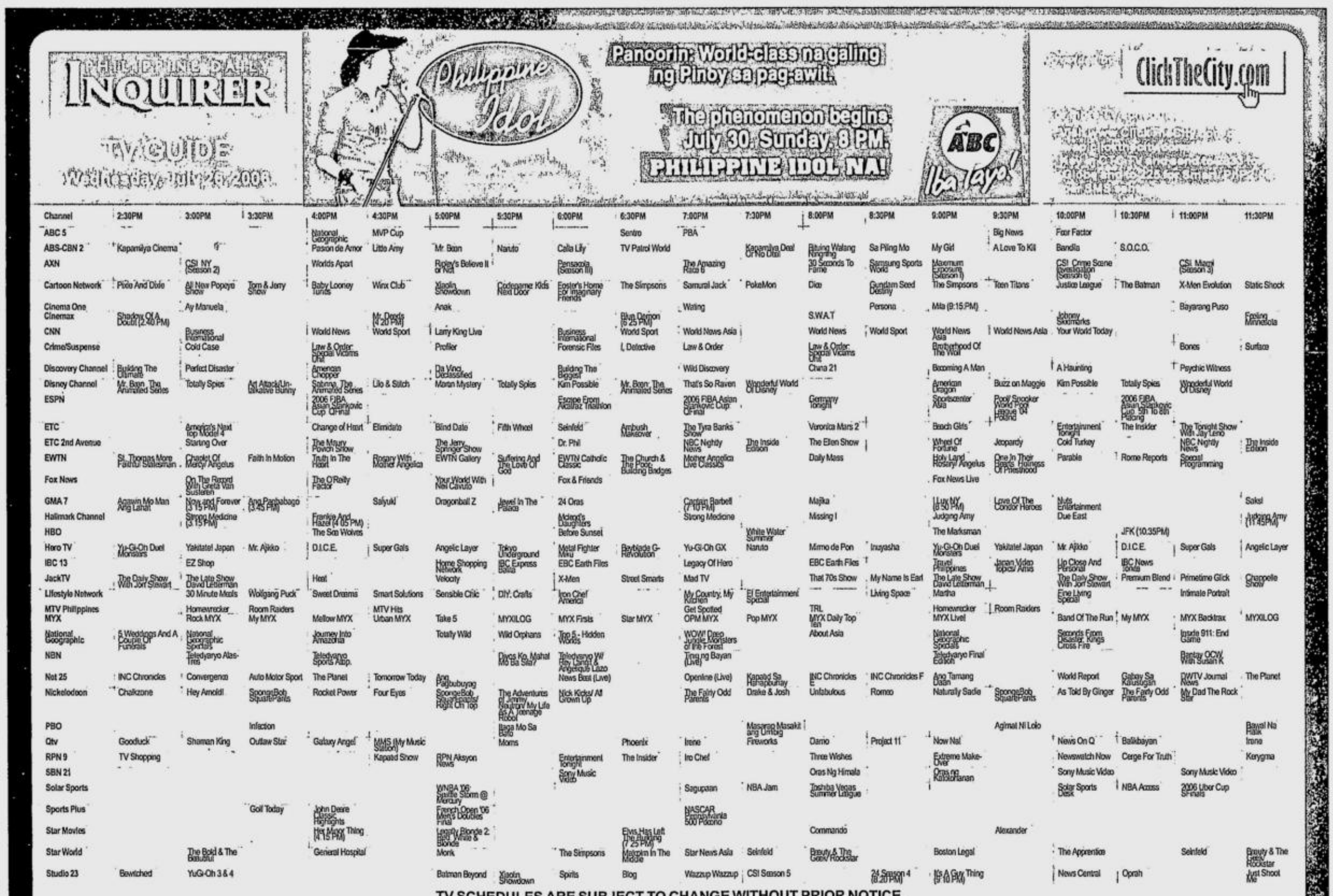
"We haven't got a date set, but we are going to go for some time next week—our inquiry day is usually on the Thursday," HRA spokesperson Owen Byrne said.

City Affair was being unruly in the parade ring, ultimately throwing O'Neill. The jockey got to his feet and grabbed the reins, pulling the horse to him, before lowering the butt of his helmet into it.

"Angry jockey does a 'Zidane' to his horse," read the headline of London's Evening Standard.

City Affair went on to finish fourth in the two-mile event. O'Neill was given a caution by stewards for his use of the whip in the race.

The 26-year-old O'Neill, who has ridden 51 winners, was previously questioned by the HRA over his ride of a novice hurdler in March. *AP*



Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5				National Geographic	MVP Cup				Sentro	PBA					Big News	Fear Factor			
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasan de Amor	Little Amy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Calla Lily	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Bitoy Walang Kupas Kupas	Sa Piling Mo	My Girl	A Love To Kill	Bandila	S.O.C.O.		
AXN		CSI: NY (Season 2)		Worlds Apart		Ripley's Believe It or Not		Pensacola (Season III)		The Amazing Race 6		30 Seconds To Fame	Samsung Sports World	Maximum Exposure (Season 1)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 6)		CSI: Miami (Season 3)	
Cartoon Network	Pido And Dido	All New Popeye Show	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	Codename: Kids Next Door	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	The Simpsons	Samurai Jack	PokeMon	Dice	Gundam Seed Destiny	The Simpsons	Teen Titans	Justice League	The Batman	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock
Cinema One		Ay Manuela			Mr. Deeds (4:20 PM)	Anak			Elva Dimon (6:25 PM)	Waiting		S.W.A.T	Persona	Mila (9:15 PM)		Johnny Skidmarks		Bayarang Puso	Feeling Minnesota
Cinemax	Shadow Of A Doubt (2:40 PM)																		
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Cold Case		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	L Detective	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Brotherhood Of The Wolf				Bones	Surface
Discovery Channel	Building The Ultimate	Perfect Disaster		American Chopper		Da Vinci Decassified		Building The Biggest		Wild Discovery		China 21		Becoming A Man		A Haunting		Psychic Witness	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-Bilative Bunny	Salamat: The Animated Series	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World of Disney			American Dragon	Buzz on Maggie	Kim Possible	Totally Spies	Wonderful World of Disney	
ESPN				2006 FIBA Asian Stankovic Cup: Final				Escape From Alcatraz: Trailblazers		2006 FIBA Asian Stankovic Cup: Final		Germany Tonight		Sportscenter Asia	Pool/ Snooker World Pool League '04 Holland				
ETC		America's Next Top Model 4		Change of Heart	Eliminate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Veronica Mars 2		Beach Girls		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Cold Turkey		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	St. Thomas More Patriot Statesman	Chariot Of Mercy/ Angelus	Faith In Motion	Truth In The Heart	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Suffering And The Love Of God	EWTN Catholic Classic	The Church & The Pope: Building Bridges	Mother Angelica Live Classics		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	One In Their Hearts: Holiness Of Priesthood	Parable	Rome Reports	Special Programming	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat	Now and Forever (3:15 PM) Strong Medicine (5:15 PM)	Ang Panbabago (3:45 PM)		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Jewel In The Palace	24 Oras		Captain Barbell (7:10 PM) Strong Medicine		Majika Missing I		I Luv NY (8:50 PM) Judging Amy	Love Of The Condor Heroes	Nuts Entertainment Due East			Saksi	
Hallmark Channel				Frankie And Hazel (4:05 PM) The Sea Wolves				Mcleod's Daughters						The Marksman			JFK (10.35PM)		Judging Amy (11:45PM)
HBO								Before Sunset			White Water Summer								
Hero TV	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Angelic Layer	Tokyo Underground	Metal Fighter Miku	Beyblade G-Revolution	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Naruto	Mirmo de Pon	Inuyasha	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Angelic Layer
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	EBC Earth Files		Legacy Of Hero		EBC Earth Files		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Anis	Up Close And Personal	IBC News Tonite	Premium Blend	
JackTV	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Late Show David Letterman		Heat		Velocity		X-Men	Street Smarts	Mad TV		That 70s Show	My Name Is Earl	The Late Show David Letterman		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart			Chappelle Show
Lifestyle Network		30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	DIY: Crafts	Iron Chef America		My Country, My Kitchen	El Entertainment Special		Living Space	Martha		Fine Living Special		Intimate Portrait	
MTV Philippines MYX		Homewrecker Rock MYX	Room Raiders My MYX	Mellow MYX	MTV Hits Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXILOG	MYX Finals	Star MYX	Get Spotted OPM MYX	Pop MYX	TRL MYX Daily Top Ten		Homewrecker MYX Live!	Room Raiders	Band Of The Run	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXILOG
National Geographic	5 Weddings And A Couple Of Funerals	National Geographic Sports		Journey Into Amazonia		Totally Wild	Wild Orphans	Top 5 - Hidden Worlds		WOW! Deep Jungle: Monsters of the Forest		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Seconds From Disaster: Kings Cross Fire		Inside 911: End Game	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Addp.			Divas: Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya?	Teledyaryo W/ Ces Drilon & Angelique Lazo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Nat 25	INC Chronicles	Convergence	Auto Motor Sport	The Planet	Tomorrow Today	Ang Pagbubuyag		News Beat (Live)		Openline (Live)	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	INC Chronicles E	INC Chronicles F	Ang Tamang Daan		World Report	Gabay Sa Kaluluan	DWTV Journal News	The Planet
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	SpongeBob SquarePants	Rocket Power	Four Eyes	SpongeBob SquarePants: Right Ch Top	The Adventures of Jimmy Neutron: My Life as a Teenage Robot	Nick Kicks/ All Grown Up		The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	Romeo	Naturally Sadie	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Infection				Ilaga Mo Sa Bato				Masarap Masakit ang Umibig				Agimat Ni Lolo				Bawal Na Halik
Qtv	Goodluck	Shaman King	Outlaw Star	Galaxy Angel	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Phoenix	Irene	Fireworks	Dario	Project 11	Now Na!		News On Q	Balikbayan		Irene
RPN 9	TV Shopping				Kapatid Show	RPN Aksyon News		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Iro Chef		Three Wishes		Extreme Make-Over		Newswatch Now	Cerge For Truth		Kerygma
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Sony Music Video		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports						WNBA '06: Seattle Storm @ Mercury				Sagupaan	NBA Jam	Toshiba Vegas Summer Lalgue				Solar Sports Desk	NBA Access	2006 Uber Cup Semi-finals	
Sports Plus			Golf Today	John Deere Classic Highlights		French Open '06 Men's Doubles Final				NASCAR Pennsylvania 500 Pocono									
Star Movies				Her Minor Thing (4:15 PM)		Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde			Elvis Has Left The Building (7:25 PM)			Commando			Alexander				
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Monk		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	Beauty & The Geek/ Rockstar		Boston Legal		The Apprentice		Seinfeld	Beauty & The Geek/ Rockstar
Studio 23	Bewitched	YuGi-Oh 3 & 4				Batman Beyond	Xiaolin Showdown	Spirits	Blog	Wazzup Wazzup	CSI Season 5		24 Season 4 (8:20 PM)	It's A Guy Thing (9:10 PM)		News Central	Oprah		Just Shoot Me

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) **or email us at** pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

AIKO AND Martin Jickain

Indictment recommended

By Nini Valera

A DAY BEFORE AIKO MELENDEZ AND husband Martin Jickain threw a baby shower for their forthcoming daughter, a Makati City trial court handed down a resolution recommending the actress-councilor's (Quezon City) indictment for two counts of slight physical injuries filed against her by Ronald Serrano, Mariquita Montelibano and Madonna Happy Ongpauco-Rivera.

Also charged was her policeman bodyguard, PO3 Jun Rivera Alvarez.

The joint resolution was signed on Friday by Makati City 2nd Assistant City Prosecutor Andres N. Marcos.

Rivera's charges of slander, grave oral defamation and other light threats against Melendez, Alvarez and Jickain were recommended for dismissal, for insufficient evidence.

Melendez's counter charge against Serrano, Montelibano and Rivera for un-

INDICTMENT/ A2-2

Cinemalaya sets repeat screenings

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Rudy Esperas

THE JUST-concluded Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival has scheduled special repeat screenings in two weeks. This is in response to an overwhelming request for an extension, according to CCP President and festival director Nestor Jardin.

Cinemalaya ran from July 17 to 23 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

The repeat screenings of all the entries—eight full-length features and 10

CINEMALAYA/ A2-4

ANGEL AQUINO, Best Actress

MIKE SANDEJAS (right) presents The Dawn, inspiration for his film, "Tulad Ng Dati." Second from left (in white shirt) is actor Ping Medina who portrayed original lead guitarist Teddy Diaz.

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Indictment recommended

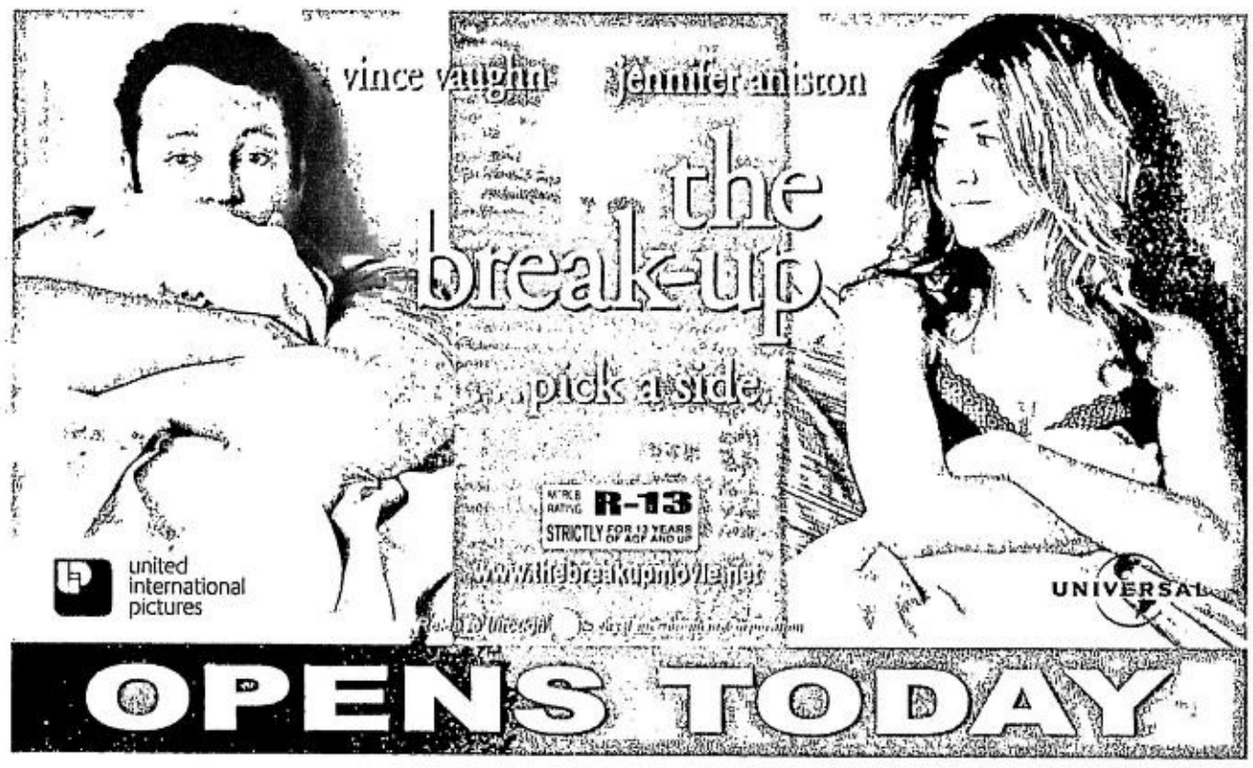
From page A2-1

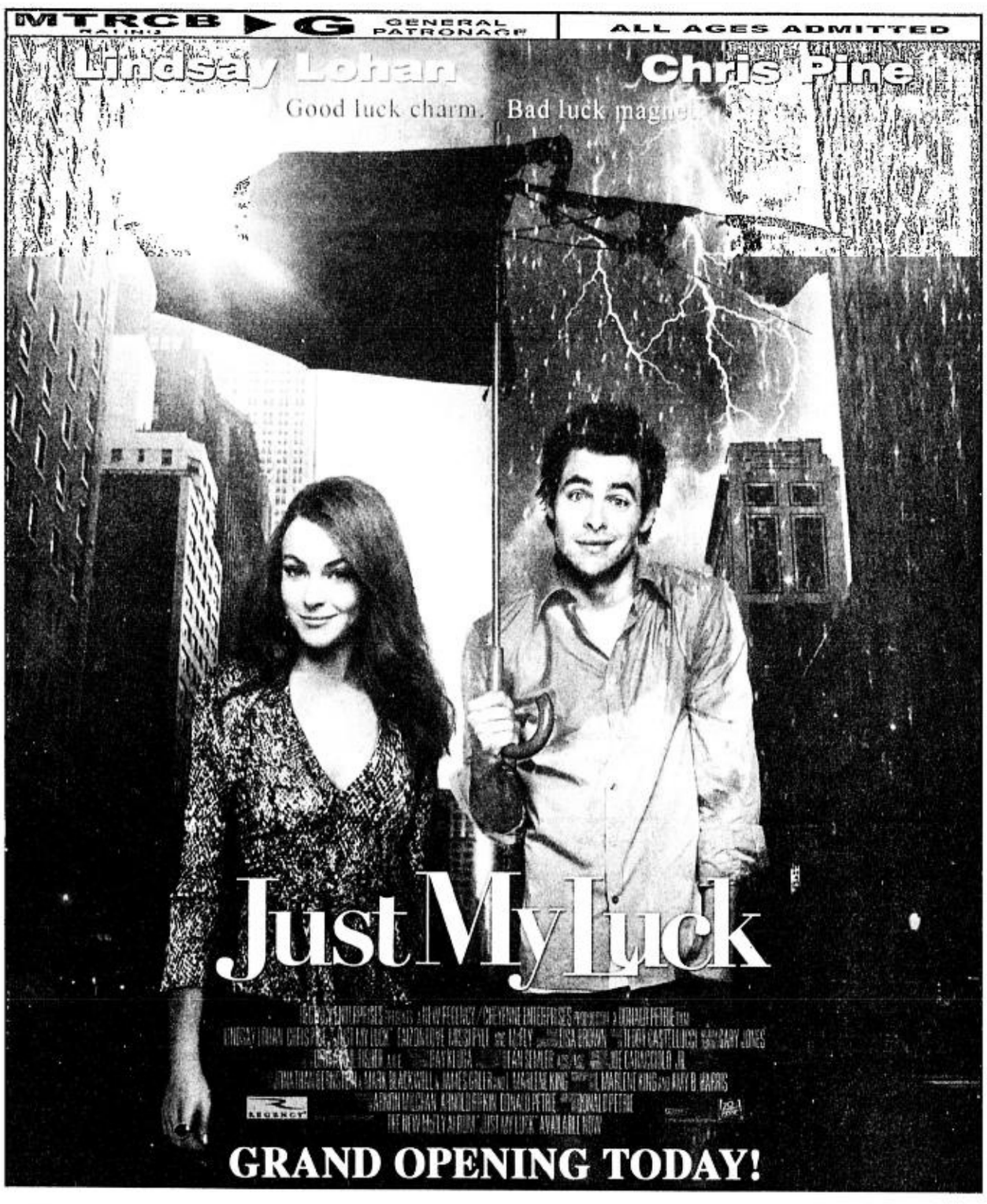
just vexation were also recommended for dismissal, as well as her charge of grave oral defamation and intriguing against honor against Montelibano.

In a phone interview with the INQUIRER on Saturday, Rivera said she was glad to see the justice system at work. "Let this be a lesson to government officials like Aiko," Rivera said.

She would have forgiven Melendez, had the latter apologized, said Rivera. But the actress has not made a move, she said

The cases against Melendez were filed after an incident at the Novu Bar and Restaurant in Greenbelt, Makati on Oct. 2, 2005.





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MALL 5

JUST MY LUCK 12:40 / 3:10 / 5:40 / 8:10	LADY IN THE WATER 12:00 R3 / 1:40 / 4:00 / 6:20 / 8:40	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 12:10 R3 / 2:30 / 5:30 / 8:30
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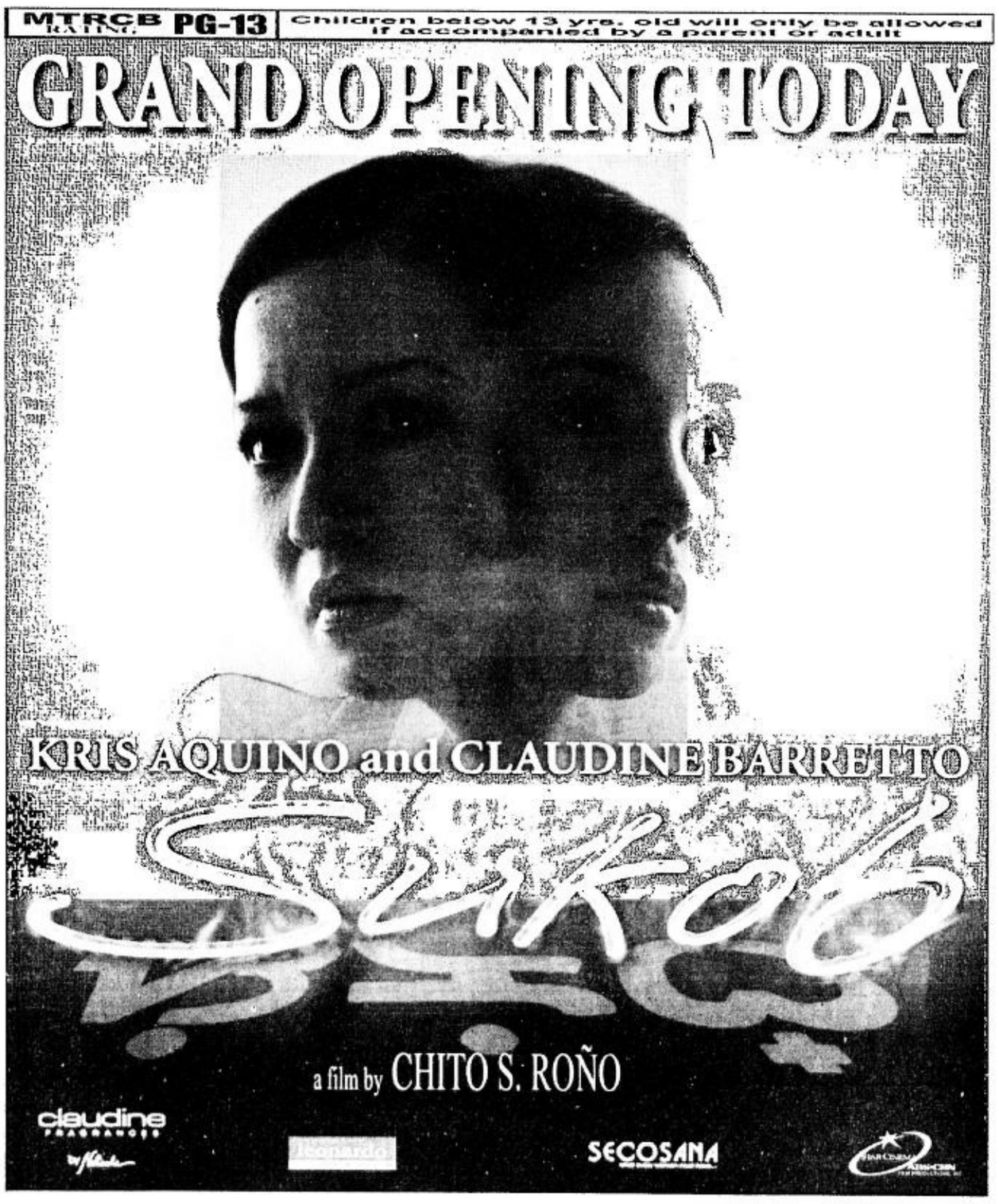
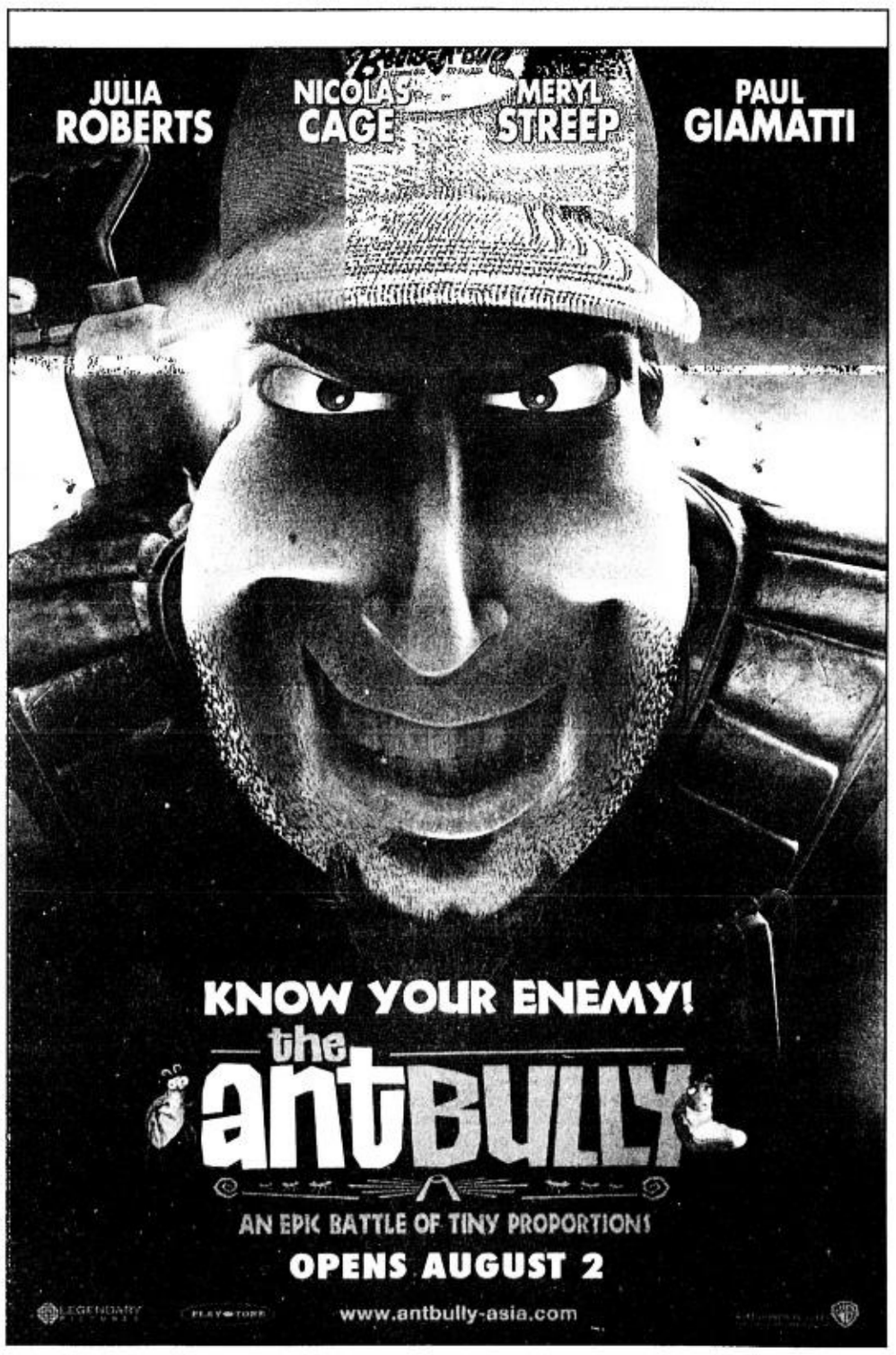




OPENING TODAY

Sukob

Stars Claudine Barretto, Kris Aquino, Wendell Ramos, Boots Anson-Roa

Directed by Chito Roño

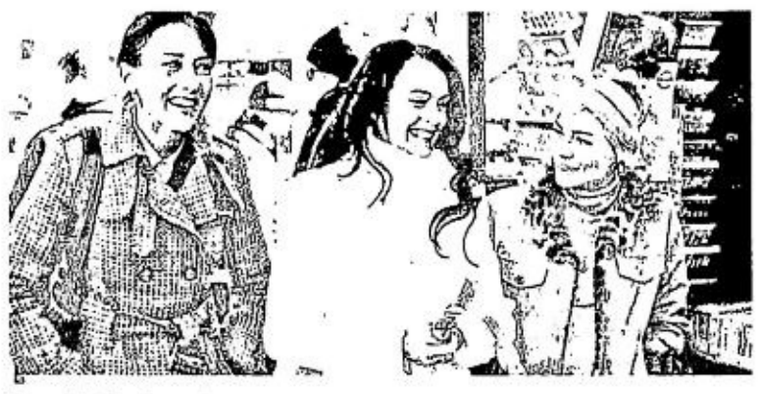
Is Roño venturing into M. Night Shyamalan territory? "It's just that horror movies always have a twist in the end," Roño explains. Indeed, there is a lot of secrecy surrounding the story of his new thriller from Star Cinema, the same company behind his previous hit "Feng Shui." Lead star Barretto says it's difficult to promote a movie after being given very strict instructions not to divulge basic plot points. Suffice it to say that it involves the overlapping stories of two brides (Barretto and Aquino) and dire warnings about curses and violent deaths. Roño says: "I wanted to do something modern and Asian at the same time. The *sukob* superstition is inherently Filipino that can be traced to the agrarian nature of ancient Philippine society."

The Break-Up

Stars Jennifer Aniston, Vince Vaughn, Ann-Margret, Jason Bateman

Directed by Peyton Reed

A tour guide-comic (Vaughn) and an art gallery assistant (Aniston) meet in a Cubs game, fall in love and shack up in a condo. All's rosy until they split up and their love nest is turned into a war zone. No, this is not the film version of the book "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus." Never the twain shall meet. Mike Ward of Richmond.com raves: "What ... makes it good and refreshing is its firm denial of the 'chick flick' stamp of approval ... Other movies have tried to buck romantic-comedy clichés, but always collapsed in the third act." Philip Wuntch of The Dallas Morning News: "Direction is as inconsistent as the script. Like so many contemporary movies, it doesn't know when to call it quits."

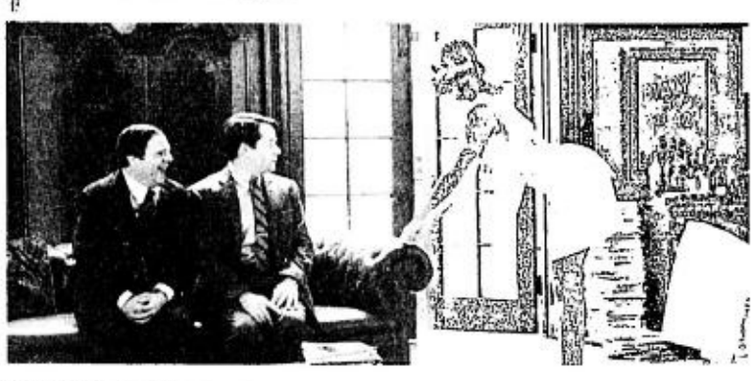


Just My Luck

Stars Lindsay Lohan, Chris Pine, Bree Turner, Faizon Love

Directed by Donald Petrie

After a quick kiss at a lavish masquerade ball, a fast-rising careerist (Lohan) loses her good fortune to a hopeless, accident-prone guy (Pine). She then spends the rest of the movie dodging bad luck and slapstick. Justin Chang of Variety describes this romantic-comedy as "disposable as a broken mirror ... [that] plays like a focus-group compilation of everything a 12-year-old girl would want in a movie." Gene Seymour of Newsday laments that the script was meant to showcase Lohan's gift as a "physical comedian ... but her every faux pas comes across as rank humiliation." Ella Taylor of the LA Weekly concurs: "[Its] colorless script is so unremittingly chipper, you want to shoot it on sight."



The Producers

Stars Nathan Lane, Matthew Broderick, Uma Thurman, Will Ferrell

Directed by Susan Stroman

The movie-turned-musical-turned-movie recounts the shenanigans of a schlock Broadway impresario (Lane) who schemes with his nerdy accountant (Broderick) to abscond with investors' money by concocting a sure-fire flop, "Springtime for Hitler." Steve Schneider of the Orlando Weekly says, "A 134-minute musical comedy is a dumb idea ... [The choreographer-turned-director] has no idea what to do with the camera." Lisa Schwarzbaum of Entertainment Weekly comments: "The broad busyness [of the musical] looks positively garish now crammed back onto film." Bob Strauss of the Los Angeles Daily News observes: "Everything is much louder, broader and, well, stagier ... It has no pretensions to anything other than wallowing in its own bad taste." Exclusively at Glorietta 4 and Greenbelt 3 Cinemas.

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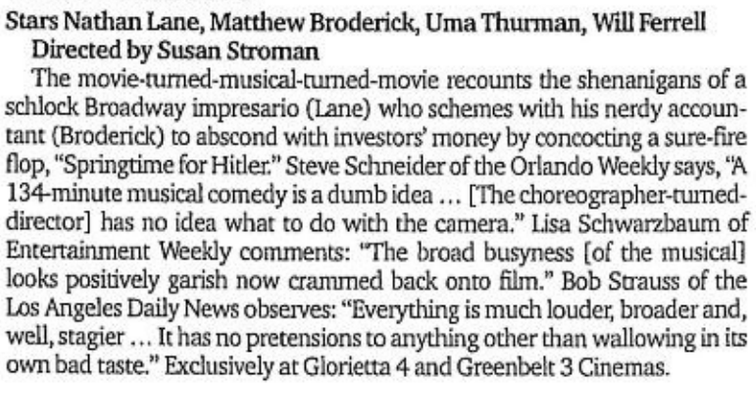

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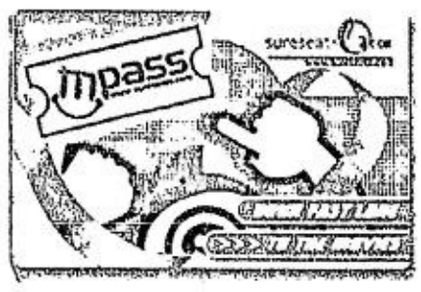

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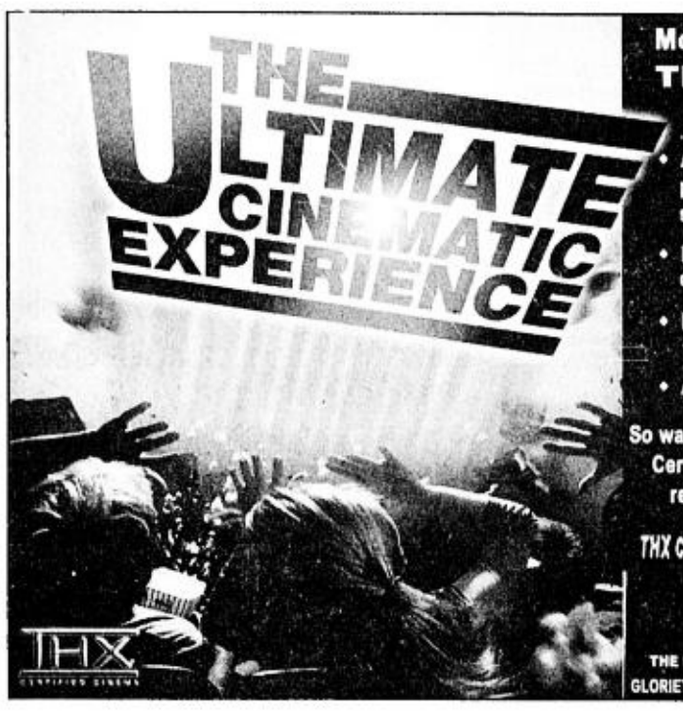

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2 THE BREAK-UP
3 SUKOB
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2

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2 THE BREAK UP
3 SUKOB
4 JUST MY LUCK

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3 SUKOB
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
5 WHITE LADY

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www.christbeauty.com.ph
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1 WHITE LADY
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
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PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
2 SUKOB
3 WHITE LADY

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4 JUST MY LUCK
5 THE BREAK UP
6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
7 SUKOB
8 LADY IN THE WATER
9 NACHO LIBRE
10 WHITE LADY

Blue Wave
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2 JUST MY LUCK
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
4 RESERVED

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2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
3 SUKOB
4 WHITE LADY
5 THE BREAK UP

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2 SUKOB
3 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS-3
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2 WHITE LADY
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2

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2 TAKE THE LEAD

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3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2

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4 JUST MY LUCK
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6 SUKOB

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8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

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2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 WHITE LADY
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3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 WHITE LADY

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2 SUKOB	7 LADY IN THE WATER
3 JUST MY LUCK	8 WHITE LADY
4 THE BREAK-UP	9 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
5 NACHO LIBRE	10 SUPERMAN RETURNS

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2 WHITE LADY	5 SUKOB
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Cinemalaya sets repeat screenings

From page A2-1

short films—are set at the UP Film Institute in Quezon City from Aug. 7 to 10, said Jardin.

"We received numerous requests for the film fest to be extended, but all venues at the CCP have been booked for the year," he told INQUIRER Entertainment on Monday. "If there are more requests after UP, we'll look for available dates at the CCP or in SM malls."

Best Picture

Michael Sandejas' "Tulad ng Dati" was declared Best Picture at the conclusion of the 2nd Cinemalaya Film Fest on Sunday.

The awards ceremony was held at the CCP Main Theater.

"Tulad ng Dati," which follows the lives of the members of the band The Dawn in the last 20 years, won P200,000 in cash.

Jury's choice

But it was "Batad, Sa Paang Palay," by directors Vic Acedillo Jr. and Benji Garcia, that won the big one from a filmmaker's point of view—P50,000 in cash, plus P1-million post prod package from Road Runner (transfer from digital to film) as recipient of the Special Jury Award. The movie is set in Banawe, Mountain Province.

Best actors

"Batad" lead actor Alchris Galura also won Best Actor. The Best Actress trophy went to Angel Aquino, who portrayed a breast cancer survivor in "Donsol," a movie about a whale shark guide, set in Sorsogon

Ron Bryant won Best Director for "Rotonda," a film that tackles human connectivity, as shown in the way a marked P1,000-peso bill changes hands.

Other awards in the Full-Length Feature category were: Best Screenplay, "Batad"; Best Editing, "Tulad ng Dati" and "Rotonda"; Best Cinematography, "Donsol"; Best Production Design, "Batad"; Best Musical Score, "Rotonda"; Best Sound, "Tulad ng Dati."

Short films

In the Short Film category, the big winner was Rommel Tolentino's "Orasyon." It was declared Best Film, with a cash prize of P100,000.

Jose Emmanuel Taylo's "Kwarto" received the Special Jury Prize, which came with P25,000 in cash.

The Best Director award went to Jeck Cogama for "Putot," while Hubert Tibi won Best Screenplay for "Parang Pelikula."

The Cinemalaya film fest opened on July 17.

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	4 THE PRODUCERS	5 NACHO LIBRE	6 SUKOB	7 LADY IN THE WATER
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 SUKOB		2 THE BREAK-UP	
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX JUST MY LUCK GUARANTEED SEATS		2 THX THE BREAK-UP GUARANTEED SEATS	
	3 THE PRODUCERS GUARANTEED SEATS	4 LADY IN THE WATER GUARANTEED SEATS	5 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST GUARANTEED SEATS	
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REVIEW

JACK BLACK gets to play all his tricks.

Packed with juvenile jokes

'Nacho Libre' is fun; just don't expect anything real witty

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

FUNNYMAN JACK BLACK GETS TO do things he's most known for—play an ambitious loser, sing oddsongs and perform physical humor—in "Nacho Libre," a juvenile comedy about a monastery cook who tries to fulfill his childhood dream of becoming a celebrated masked wrestler in Mexico.

Not annoying

Given these elements, it should've been a total riot. But what "Nacho" cooks up is a simple, selectively funny film that's not unlike a small comedy sketch stretched to its limits and given the big-screen treatment.

It's not annoying; it's just mostly nonsensical despite its interesting premise.

Orphaned at an early age and forced into years of servitude, Ignacio (Black), son of a Mexican deacon and a Scandinavian missionary, cooks variations of the same unpalatable goop topped with stale nacho chips. A wrestling opportunity materializes, but he and skinny tag-team partner Esqueleto (Hector Jimenez) lose one game after another. They unwittingly provide entertainment by being beaten up regularly, though, but both wrestlers still dream of graduating to the big leagues.

In theme and style, "Nacho Libre" feels like a campy '80s Filipino comedy film, a genre all its own that starred comedic actors Chiquito, Panchito and Rene Requiestas. The humor is mostly old toilet jokes (Ignacio breaks wind a lot), some fat jokes (Esqueleto gets harassed by a big, aggressive lady) and painful "Three Stooges"-type gags (bumbling characters are get physically harmed non-stop).

The whole deal feels very familiar, and the laughs get old real quick. But a subplot, Ignacio's crush on the new nun Sister Encarnacion (Ana De La Reguera), lends a touch of sweetness.

Simplistic

Director Jared Hess ("Napoleon Dynamite") co-wrote the screenplay with wife Jerusha and Mike White, and the result is a decidedly silly and simplistic comedy for easy-to-please youngsters. The gross out quotient doesn't quite match a typical Farrelly Brothers film's on the disgust-o-meter, but it comes pretty close. Every long scene has a punch line that's not always funny, but as a whole, "Nacho Libre" is still somewhat fun. Just don't expect anything new or genuinely witty.

Look like Papa, sing like Cash

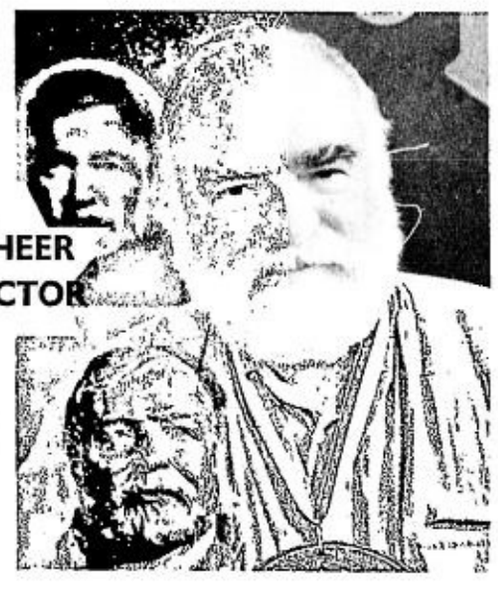
KEY WEST, FLORIDA—SINGING A TAKEOFF OF JOHNNY Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues" helped a Texas commercial property developer win an Ernest Hemingway look-alike contest during a festival honoring the author that ended Sunday.

Sporting a khaki hunting outfit, white beard and bushy eyebrows, Chris Storm, 55, hit Cash-like low notes as he sang a plea for contest judges' votes during the highlight of the six-day Hemingway Days festival.

The competition drew 130 other bearded entrants who paraded across the stage at Sloppy Joe's Bar, the author's favorite watering hole.

A crowd cheered as the judges, all past contest winners, pondered the 25 finalists' resemblance to Hemingway. Storm, a five-time competitor, co-wrote the lyrics to his Cash takeoff.

Other events included a marlin tournament, author readings, an offbeat "Running of the Bulls" and a short story competition directed by Hemingway's granddaughter, Lorian Hemingway. *AP*



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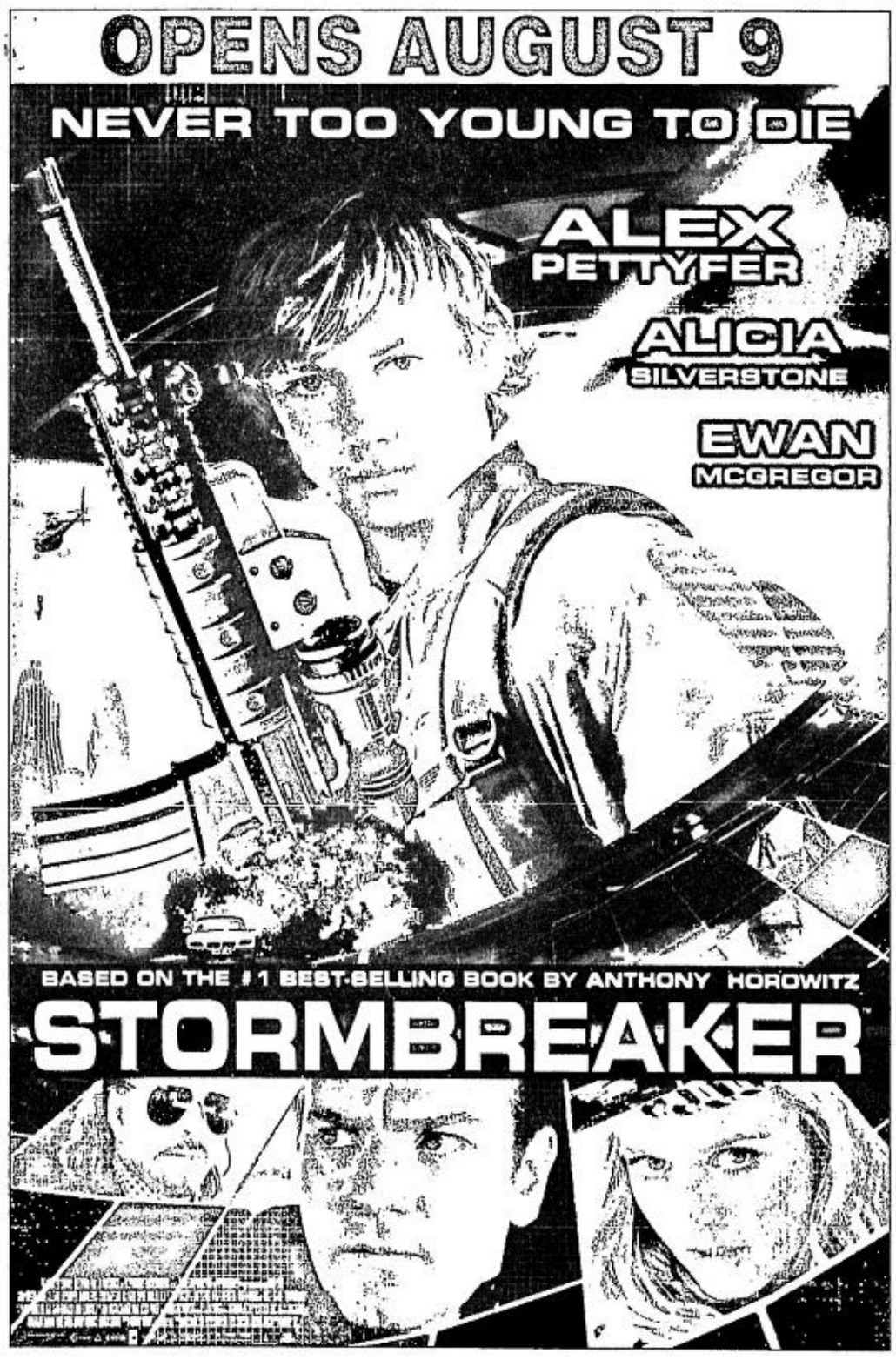

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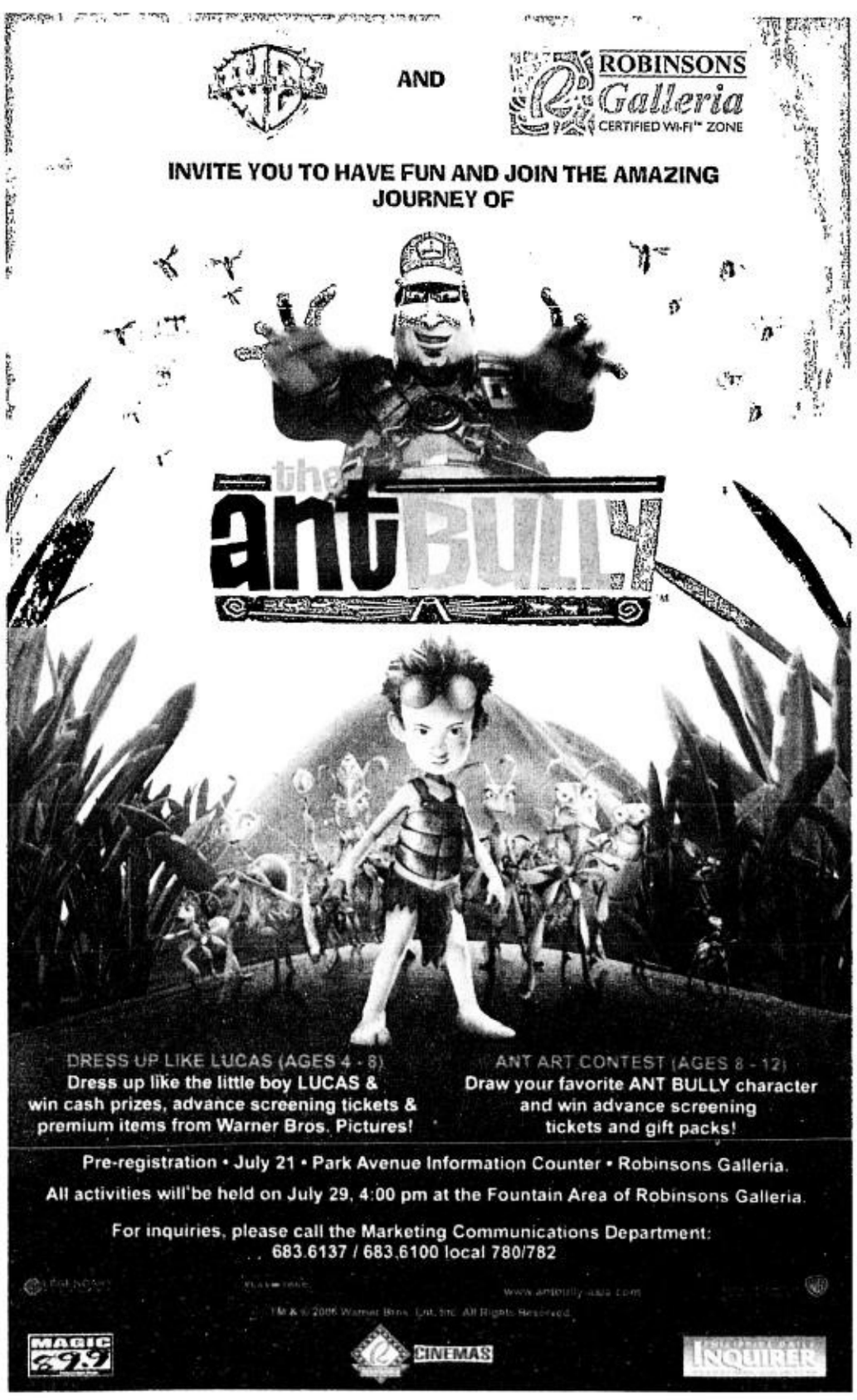

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Peso, share prices post sharp gains

Currency closes at 51.87 on back of upbeat Sona, regional trend

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez and Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY bounced back to the 51:$1 level for the first time in nearly three months, powered by President Macapagal-Arroyo's upbeat State of the Nation Address as well as a strong showing in the regional currency market.

Also, Wall Street's rally yesterday lifted Philippine share prices, which closed 1.18 percent higher, fund managers said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index gained 26.42 points to 2,267.67 after trading between 2,259.54 and 2,273.63.

Volume was 3.69 billion shares worth P968.3 million, with gainers beating losers 49 to 17. A total of 60 stocks were unchanged.

The broader all-shares index advanced 12.80 points to 1,409.74.

The peso opened at the intra-day low of 52.16 and breached the psychological barrier of 52:$1 to close strongly at 51.87 against the greenback.

It was the first time since May 16 that the peso traded at the 51:$1 level. The local currency peaked at 50.88:$1 in March this year, just before Asian emerging markets, including the Philippines, succumbed to a massive selling by offshore investors who were distracted by rising interest rates in the United States.

Yesterday, the local currency gained 29.50 centavos from Friday's finish of 52.165 against the US dollar at the Philippine Dealing System. This year, it has appreciated by 2.3 percent since its 2005 ending of 53.09:$1.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the movement of the peso reflected market confidence on the government's economic reforms and prospects of the country.

"The peso was also buoyed by dollar inflows over the weekend," Tetangco said. "This was complemented by regional currency strength."

Jonathan Ravelas of Banco de Oro Univer-

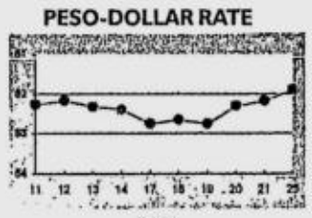
PESO/ B3

INDICATORS
CURRENCIES

₱51.87 = $1
As of 5 p.m., July 25, 2006

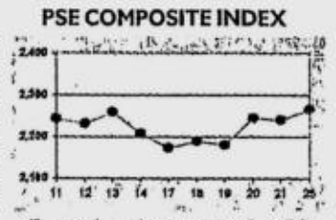
¥116.62 = $1
As of 5 p.m., July 25, 2006

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



JULY

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

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May imports up by 15.2% to $4.376B

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S IMPORTS ROSE 15.2 PERcent to $4.376 billion in May from that of the same month last year, buoyed by an increase in the purchase of electronic goods and spike in oil prices.

With the rise in May shipments, the imports figure for the first five months of the year reached $19.965 billion, representing an 8.2-percent increase from the $18.455 billion in the same period a year ago, according to data from the National Statistics Office.

With exports in the first five months of the year standing at $18.687 billion, the country's balance of trade settled at a deficit of $1.279 billion, a 45-percent drop from last year's trade deficit of $2.342 billion.

Imports of electronics, which accounted for 45 percent of the total import bill for the month, reached $1.984 billion in May—an increase of 9.1 percent year-on-year.

Dennis Arroyo, director for policy and planning of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda), said the increase in electronics imports could indicate that the country's exports would rise as well.

The country's exports are composed largely of finished electronic goods. The raw materials that went into the production of the goods accounted for the bulk of imports.

"The increase in capital goods, such as telecommunication equipment and electrical machinery, reflected prospects for a more robust economic activity, particularly growth in the industry sector," Arroyo said.

The NSO reported that imports of capital goods rose 12.6 percent year-on-year in May to $1.275 billion.

The growth in imports, however, was also attributed to the increase in oil prices. Expenditures for oil imports reached $899.58 million, reflecting an 82-percent rise from the previous year's level of $494.26 million. The NSO said the increase in oil imports was due largely to higher cost rather than increase in volume.

Average Dubai crude in May 2006 stood at $65 a barrel, 43 percent higher than the $45.4 a barrel in the same month last year.

MAY IMPORTS/ B2

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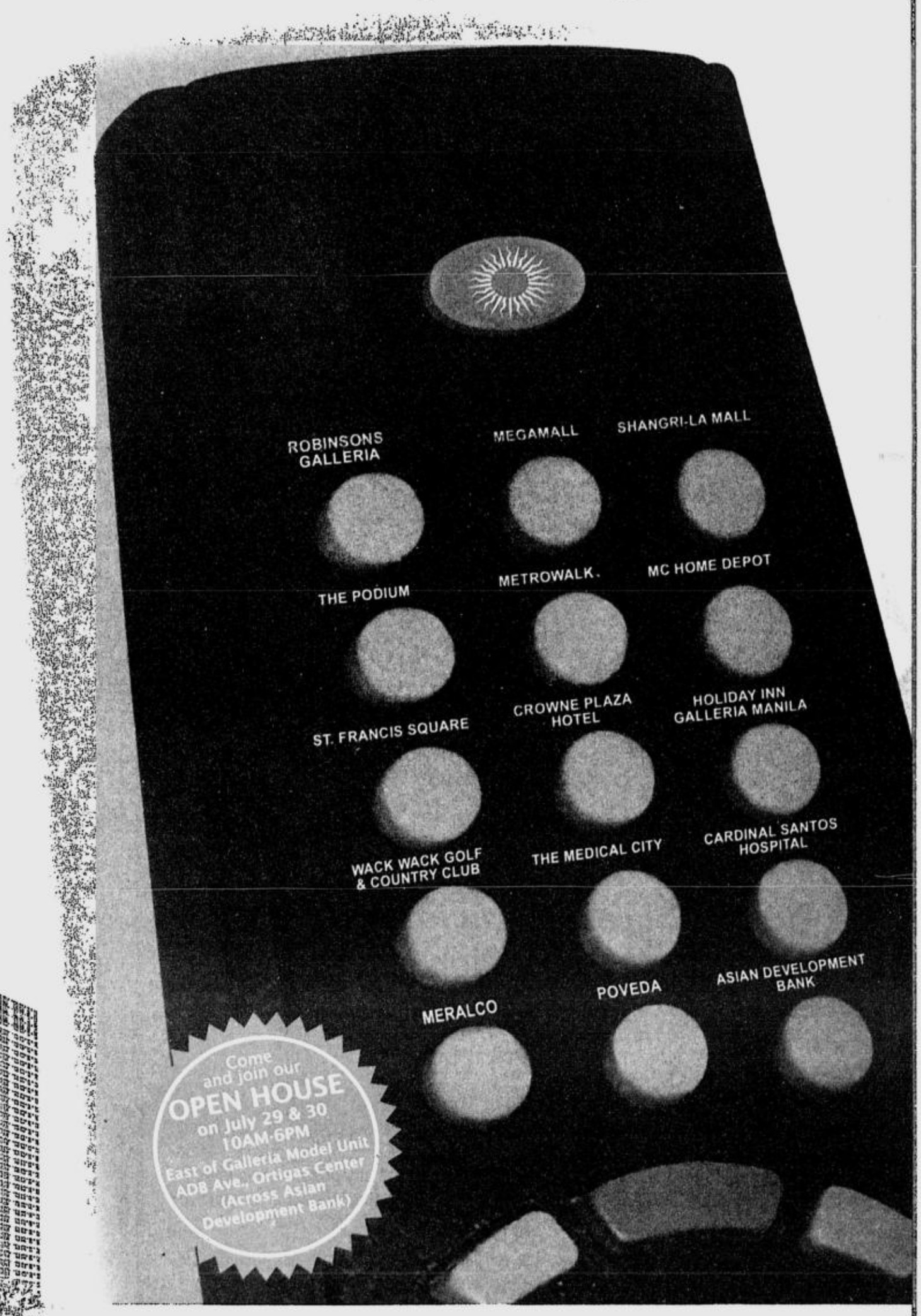

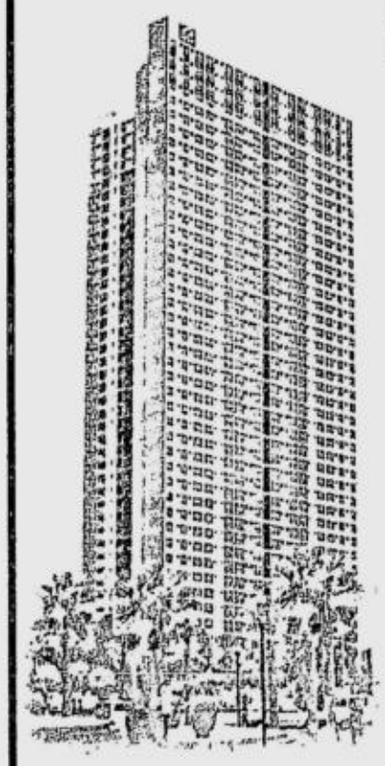

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Petron raising ₱5.5B via notes issuance

INDUSTRY LEADER PETRON CORP. ISsued P5.5 billion worth of five-year fixed rate corporate notes to raise funds for the construction of new facilities.

In a statement issued yesterday, the oil firm said the original plan was to raise only P3 billion from the notes issuances. The amount, it said, was raised to P5.5 billion after the firm received bids worth P11.2 billion.

"The strong response to our notes issue reflects the trust and confidence of the investment community in the viability and profitability of Petron over the long-term," Petron chair Nicasio Alcantara said.

The notes were priced at 8.875 percent for a five-year tenor, 53 basis points below the July 21 5-year MART1 rate of 9.405 percent.

Petron claimed this issue was the largest peso private placement and the lowest priced corporate issue of its kind.

BPI Capital Corp. and ING Bank NV in Manila were the arrangers of the issue.

Petron said proceeds from the notes issue would be used to finance its petro fluidized catalytic cracker (PetroFCC), which is now under construction at its refinery in Bataan.

The PetroFCC will allow the oil firm to produce more high-value white products such as diesel, gasoline and liquefied petroleum gas, as well as extract the petrochemical propylene.

Petron will also put up another refinery unit for the extraction of other petrochemicals, including benzene and toluene, and the expansion of its mixed xylene production capacity. *Abigail L. Ho*

Gov't sells $750M worth of bonds

Last sovereign issue this year to complete borrowing need

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT HAS FLOATED $750 million worth of 10- and 25-year sovereign bonds to complete its foreign borrowing requirement for the year.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the government would raise the funds by reopening its 2016 and 2031 euro- and dollar-denominated bond issues.

Offering an initial guide to investors, Cruz said the 2016 bonds would be priced to yield 7.56 percent to 7.62 percent and the 2031 bonds would be priced to yield 7.86 percent to 7.91 percent.

Cruz said this would be the country's last sovereign bond issue this year.

Last January, the government raised $2.2 billion from the international offering of the 10- and 25-year bonds.

With $2.2 billion of the $3.1 billion planned foreign borrowings for the year already raised, the government should be borrowing $900 million from the latest bond flotation. However, Cruz said the government had cut down its intended external borrowing plan and decided to raise only $750 million from this fund raising activity.

The change in the borrowing plan for the year came amid the government's improving fiscal condition. For the first six months of the year, the government's budget deficit amounted to only P31.5 billion, way below the P90.4-billion ceiling set for the period.

The fiscal performance in the first six months was marked by three consecutive monthly budget surpluses from April to June.

The lower-than-programmed deficit was attributed to an increase in revenue collection and tight spending. Restraint in spending, however, was brought about by the failure of Congress to pass the proposed P1.053-trillion national budget for 2006, which forced the government to operate under the reenacted 2005 budget.

Analysts said it was the right time for the Philippines to tap the international capital market which had calmed down with the expectation that the US Federal Reserve had already put an end to the successive hikes in its interest rate. The US Fed had been raising its key policy rate, which now stands at 5.25 percent, since June 2004 in a bid to temper inflationary pressures.

EPCIB fallout

THE BOARDROOM FIGHT IN EQUITABLE PCIBank has spilled big time over to the Manila Golf Club, with stockbroker Robert Coyiuto Jr. filing a P1-billion libel complaint against a tabloid controlled by his erstwhile golf buddy, EPCIB director Ferdinand Martin Romualdez.

Coyiuto has been the object of a series of unflattering reports, deservedly or undeservedly, in the People's Journal, after being suspected of helping SM heiress Teresita Sy against Romualdez in the Equitable PCIBank fight.

But even before the EPCIB boardroom fight, the relations between Romualdez and Coyiuto had already been strained, after Romualdez allied himself with his business adviser, Manila Golf kingpin Macario Te, in the latter's feud with Coyiuto.

It is not clear what had caused the breakup, but it resulted in Coyiuto altogether having stopped attending the regular "Coffee with Te" sessions at Starbucks Forbes, resigning his Manila Golf Club directorship—Romualdez was then MGC chair—and confining himself to playing in Wack Wack.

With his Manila Golf and coffee cronies gone, Coyiuto has been seen gravitating to the Sys and going more and more with taipan John Gokongwei and his good friend, former EPCIB chair Antonio Go.

Te, in the meantime, saw his son, Anthony, lose the Equitable PCIBank board seat which he won only last year when Romualdez and Sy were still allies in their fight to oust the Gos from Equitable PCIBank.

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

Money-go-round

• THE operations of Kenny Rogers' Roasters and Seattle's Best coffee chain should remain normal despite Tuesday's commissary fire, with supply operations having been quickly transferred to another company warehouse, according to Kenny Rogers/Seattle's Best principal, Bernadine Siy.

• HIGHLANDS Prime intends to use the P2-billion proceeds from its preferred shares offering to develop the Woodridge Park in Tagaytay and a planned farmhouse village in the Laguna side of Tagaytay Highlands.

Heard through the grapevine

IN addition to the Tirol landholding family, the other big winner in the GMA state-of-the-nation announcement that an international airport will rise on Carabao island is a New Jersey-based company that controls a 68 hectare property on the island off Romblon.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

Korean group putting up ₱3-B resort in Cebu

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A GROUP OF KOREAN INvestors is putting up a P3-billion resort facility on Mactan Island.

Phil BXT Corp., the company formed by the Korean group, will build the 600-room Imperial Palace Waterpark Resort & Spa on a 7.5-hectare property in Barangay Maribago, Lapu-Lapu City.

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano said this was so far the biggest Korean investment in hotel development in the Philippines.

The hotel is expected to further boost tourist arrivals in Cebu, Durano said during the project's groundbreaking last Friday.

Since a Korean company owns the proposed resort, he said, the Philippines would be promoted more in Korea.

The steady increase in tourist arrivals in the country has created the need for additional investments in hotels and resorts in the country, said Durano.

John Hwan Park, chair of Phil BXT Corp, said he decided to invest in a resort here after seeing Cebu's potential for tourism in his previous visit. He and a group of Korean investors formed Phil BXT Corp. in 2005.

The company acquired the shoreline property of the Woolbright family, developer of the first upscale subdivision in Cebu.

Imperial Palace will be complete with swimming pools, tennis court, a ballroom and a water park, which is envisioned to feature water entertainment.

The company has tapped Summit Hotels and Resorts, a management company that owns the first Imperial Palace Hotel in Seoul, to manage the hotel.

Amando H. Huh, Imperial Palace Hotel senior director and international business development director, said his company was planning to bring in hotel executives from Korea to conduct training for the resort staff in Cebu. Some of the Cebu staff will also be brought to Korea for further training.

The Imperial Palace plans to expand operations in other places in Asia, such as China, Huh said.

In a message read by Huh, Imperial Palace chair Shin Chul Ho cited several factors that made Cebu an ideal location for the resort, including the temperature, sea condition and access to big tourist markets.

"The hotel business in Mactan promises a rosy future for all of us. More that ever, the water park in the hotel won't just be a swimming pool. It will become a milestone in the water entertainment business," he added.

Huh, who said this was his company's first venture in the Philippines, noted that Korean tourist arrivals in the Philippines rose by 18 percent during the first four months of 2006.

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NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION ·1936·

Invitation for

Expression of Interest

Private Sector Participation for Power Generation in the Island of Masbate

(NPC – SPUG)

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines, with the support of its appointed transaction advisor, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), is inviting private sector participation through long-term concession agreements, in electricity generation in the off-grid areas of the Philippines. Masbate is the fourth off-grid area to conduct a competitive selection process to be held in September, 2006.

Interested parties are requested to submit a formal Expression of Interest, including a brief profile of their Company/Group, to be received at the IFC address below along with a registration fee of Php5,000 made payable to the National Power Corporation. Once registered, they will be given an information memorandum and other documents relating to the program's investment opportunity. Registration starts on July 25, 2006 to August 15, 2006.

Sanjay Grewal
Program Manager
International Finance Corporation (IFC)
E-mail: sgrewal@ifc.org

Julie Bayking
Investment Officer
International Finance Corporation (IFC)
E-mail: jbayking@ifc.org

11th Floor, Tower One
Ayala Triangle, Ayala Avenue
Makati City Philippines
Tel (63-2) 848-7333
Fax: (63-2) 848-7339

IFC International Finance Corporation

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Forum upbeat on Naga mine

By Abigail L. Ho

FORUM ENERGY PLC, A JOINT VENTURE between Canada's Forum Energy Corp. and the United Kingdom's Sterling Energy Plc, sees around $12 million in annual revenue by end-2008 from its coal service contracts in Naga, Cebu.

In a statement posted on the company's official website, Forum said its first coal revenue should come next month. The firm started producing coal from the Naga field recently.

"The commencement of coal production represents a major step forward in providing early cash flow. The coal development has been accelerated to take advantage of the infrastructure which has already been put in place," Forum chief executive Russell Harvey said in the statement.

"This will maximize value to shareholders and, at today's prices, the predicted revenue from Naga based upon conservative production figures is approximately $12 million per year by the end of 2008," he added.

Another four shafts at the Naga mine are also seen raising production to around 300,000 tons, also by end-2008.

Harvey said Forum was working on a similar coal development program in Dalaguete, under its Southern Cebu coal service contract. This should start production by next year.

This, he said, was expected to yield approximately the same revenues at peak production.

"We see this initial development of our reserves as the start of a continuing revenue generating operation. With this in mind, Forum has already applied for two additional coal production licenses in the Naga area," he said.

Forum's two coal operating contracts in Naga and Dalaguete in Cebu have estimated proven and probable reserves of 4.9 million tons.

Apart from its expected coal revenues, Forum likewise saw its first natural gas revenues from the Libertad gas field in Cebu within the year.

Forum and the Department of Energy last November declared commercial the Libertad gas field.

May imports up by 15.2% to $4.376B

From page B1

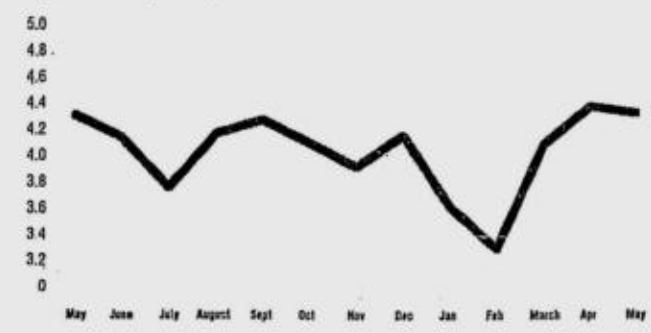
Arroyo said the imports data for the first five months kept the country poised to achieve a double-digit exports growth for the full year.

He shrugged off projections that growth in exports, which hit 16 percent in the first five months, would decline in the second half because rising US interest rates would curtail global demand.

Arroyo also believes that the US Federal Reserve may put an end to the hike in its interest rate amid a slowdown in the growth of the US economy.

He stressed exports would grew by a double-digit average for the full year given that companies normally increase their inventory in the third quarter in preparation for the Christmas season.

TOTAL IMPORTS
May 2005 to May 2006, in billion US$



He noted projections by the electronics industry in the United States that demand would rise for electronic goods like laptop computers and MP3 players.

Peso, share prices post sharp gains

From page B1

sal Bank said that the President's address yesterday considerably perked up the market, "specifically [with Ms Arroyo's] announcement that the government would ... pump-prime the economy."

"Government spending represents one-fifth of the economy so, [with the government's decision to free up more funds], the country could sustain a 5.5-percent [gross domestic product] growth," Ravelas said.

Wick Veloso of HSBC Philippines believes that the local currency may average between 51 to 52 for the year.

"The wild card is always the price of oil," Veloso said. "When oil prices get high, you don't expect people to be bullish."

On the President's promise of heavy infrastructure spending, Paul Joseph Garcia of ING Investment Management yesterday asked where the government will get the money.

"The policy has been toward fiscal prudence," Garcia said. "Question is, is this going to change now, given this new set of priorities? Will the government stick to its balanced budget target by 2008?" *With a report from AFP*

INSULAR LIFE posts strong financial performance

INSULAR LIFE, the largest Filipino life insurance company, posted a consolidated net income of P1.46 billion last year, 20% higher than the 2004 level of P1.21 billion.

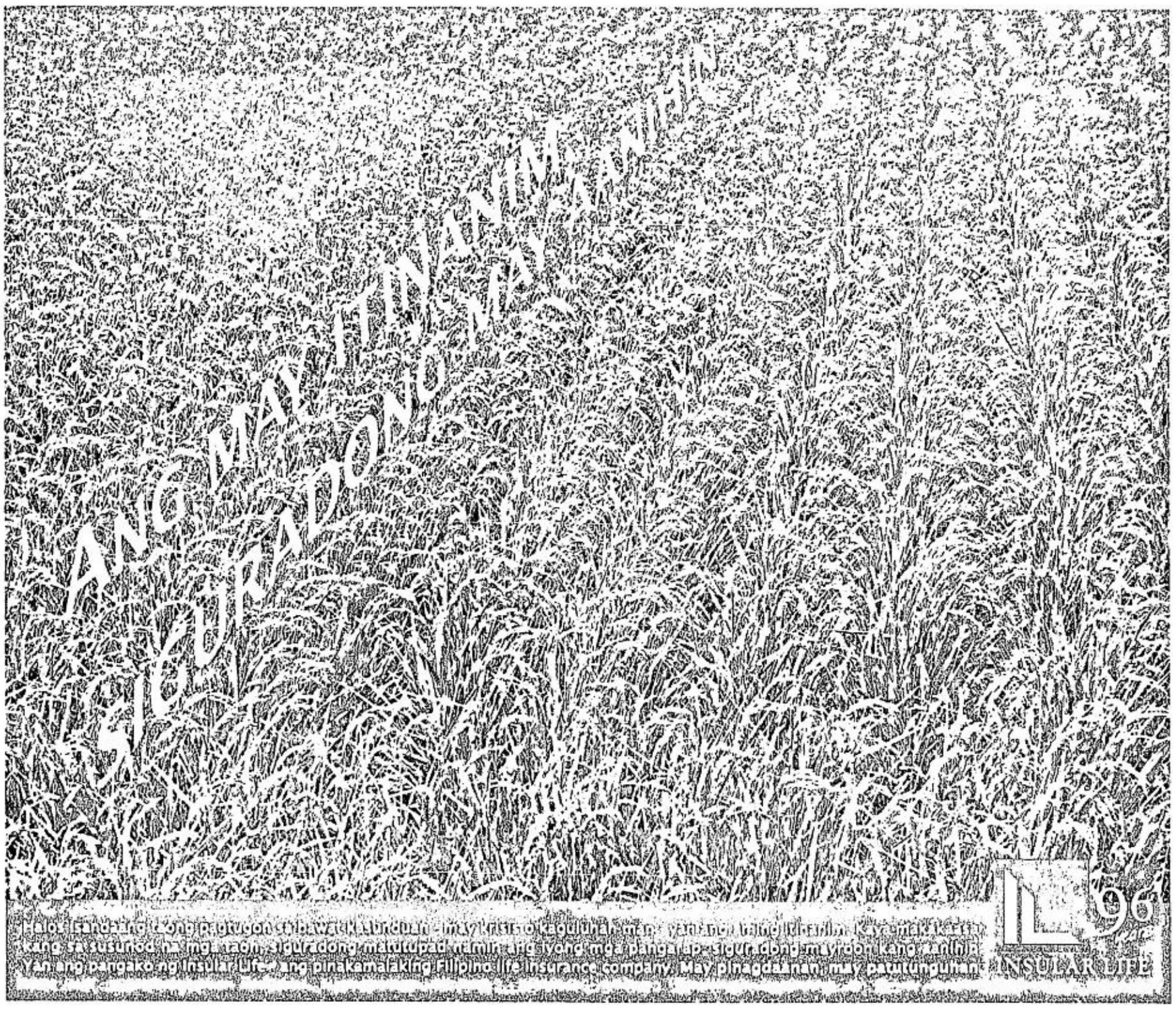
The healthy results are attributed to higher returns on invested assets, improved matching of investments to product liabilities, higher dividend income from a strong portfolio of equity investments, administrative cost savings from a more efficient customer servicing platform, and improved production from alternative distribution channels.

Insular Life's financial stability and 95-year record of delivering on its contractual commitments, have enabled the company to withstand the widespread erosion of public confidence in certain financial institutions that was brought about by the difficulties of leading pre-need companies.

Despite the political turmoil and difficult economic conditions in 2005, Insular Life generated gross premiums of P7.2 billion, which was comparable to 2004 results. Total revenues stood at P10 billion on the back of premium income and strong investment performance, which improved by 21% to P2.9 billion. Meanwhile, benefit payments to policyholders increased by 5% to P4.1 billion. Total assets increased by P1.8 billion, from P42.2 billion to P44.0 billion. Members' equity improved by P2.7 billion, from P6.8 billion in 2004 to P9.5 billion by end 2005.

Recently, the company was among the lenders that extended a P4.5 billion loan to port operator International Container Terminal Services, Inc. (ICTSI). Likewise, Insular Life, through its investment house, Insular Investment and Trust Corporation, was tapped as one of only seven (7) financial institutions that underwrote the P5.8 billion fund-raising of Ayala Corporation.

Insular Life was also adjudged as the Gold Awardee for the second consecutive year, 2005 and 2006, under the insurance category by the Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brand Survey. Insular Life scored high in the survey's quantitative and qualitative scores, performing clearly above other brands in the insurance category. It placed ahead of competitors as more respondents identified Insular Life as their life insurance company of choice. On the other hand, the Company earned consumers' nod in six key brand values: Quality, Value, Trustworthiness, Strong Image, Understanding of Customer Needs, and Innovativeness.



PNB to issue ₱3B in debt notes

Proceeds to boost 5th biggest bank's capital base

By Doris C. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BANK HAS EMBARKED on a roadshow to drum up investor interest in its planned debt paper worth at least P3 billion.

PNB plans to issue subordinated notes due 2016 with the option to redeem the notes at the end of five years or by 2011.

Issue manager ING Bank N.V. said PNB would issue the notes in two series: Series A is set aside for tax-exempt investors while Series B is for investors subject to a 20-percent withholding tax.

"The proposed offering will further strengthen the bank's capital base making PNB well-positioned to comply with the more stringent requirements of Basel 2," ING Bank said in a statement.

The selling agents include ING, First Metro Investment Corp., co-manager of the issue, and Multinational Investment Bancorporation.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' policy-making Monetary Board earlier approved PNB's offering of up to $100 million in tier 2 or subordinated debt paper.

The notes will carry a Ba3 rating by Moody's Investor Service, which recognizes PNB's position as one of the country's largest banks in terms of assets, its hold on the overseas remittances market and role as a government depository institution.

PNB has the right to redeem the notes one business day after the end of the 5th year, subject to BSP approval and certain conditions.

One of the conditions is that PNB's capital adequacy ratio (CAR) should meet the BSP's standards.

As of end-2005, the bank's CAR stood at 17.2 percent, well above the 10 percent minimum required by the BSP.

Tougher risk management guidelines have compelled banks to issue tier- 2 instruments and consider other long-term debt instruments, including long-term negotiable certificates of deposits and senior notes.

PNB, which currently ranks as the country's 5th biggest bank in terms of assets, has shown consistent improvement in profitability since 2002.

The ghost month is coming; keep your spirits up

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

I TRY TO ANSWER MOST OF MY MAIL BUT I received one letter that had me baffled. I could not think of any reply.

"Dear Ron, I am married to a man who cheats on me consistently. He has so many women that I am not even sure if the baby I am carrying is his."

Across the corridor of my condo unit, there are two women in their mid-twenties. These two women are very close and always go everywhere together. Occasionally, they have a party but only girls are invited, never any men.

My wife confided to me that she thought they were Lebanese. (I think she meant lesbian). She is going through the mental pause.

A woman confronted her husband and accused him of infidelity. He denied it strongly and said it would never happen again.

Another letter received from a devout Catholic mother said: "My son informs me that he is taking Judo. Why would a boy raised in a good Christian home turn against his own faith"?

Dear Mr. Bearbull, my 40-year-old son has been paying a psychiatrist P2,500 a week for the last three years. I think he must be crazy.

"Doctor, I keep thinking I am a pair of curtains." "Pull yourself together man."

"Doctor, I have an inferiority complex over my tiny penis." "Oh, don't let a small thing like that bother you."

Long ago, when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft. Today, it is called golf.

***

The market last week was quiet and boring and we sat around playing SUDOKU, the game that is sweeping the nation. It is very easy to learn. Just go to WEBSUDOKU.com and start with the easy ones. It really gets the gray cells working.

On Thursday evening, I watched FED CHAIRMAN BERNANKE testify before the Senate Committee. I have never watched him for any length of time before, but he answered numerous questions effortlessly, concisely, even eloquently, without giving anything away.

Unlike GREENSPAN, the master of double-speak, he spoke with clarity and was very impressive. He pointed out that inflation was too high and there were risks to the upside of not controlling it by tightening further; on the other hand, he was aware that the economy was slowing as evidenced by the housing market. He said the FED would do its best to balance the risks of inflation and recession.

Although I regarded his performance as brilliantly neutral, investors became euphoric (a common disease in Wall Street) and the DOW jumped 212 points. All Asian markets followed and the PHISIX surged 66 points.

I wrote in my newsletter that I was not impressed by the low turnover, which accompanied the rally, and warned that it might turn out to be a "dead cat bounce." This is a horrible American expression to denote a short-lived rally.

Next day, BERNANKE repeated his testimony but the questions and answers were the same and the euphoria wore off. The DOW fell 88 points and another 60 points the following day. Asian markets followed suit and it was not a good week.

On the corporate front, there was bad news from YAHOO losing market share to GOOGLE, whose search engine is now used by three times as many people. There were poor results from DELL but better figures from IBM. INTEL and AMD were both adversely affected by the price cutting war on chips, which ate into both companies' profits. The only chip-making company unaffected so far is PRINGLES.

Our own market lost ground but turnover dropped to its lowest level since Christmas Eve. The worst hit sector was mining but PX and APX had minor corrections considering that gold fell 7.2 percent on the week and copper did even worse. Zinc aluminum and precious metals like palladium and platinum all joined in the decline.

The culprit was probably the ADB report, which forecast that the economies of the US, China, India, Europe, Thailand and Taiwan would all slow next year. China's economy grew by 11.3 percent in the 2nd quarter, the fastest pace in 10 years, and the government said it would clamp down on investment and lending. Spending on factories and real estate accelerated in June, helping GDP exceed the expected figure of 10.4 percent.

It was the biggest expansion since 1994, when the economy was only a quarter of its present size. The central bank is expected to raise rates in September for a second time and order the banks to rein in credit.

The head of ADB said: "We are concerned about the overheating situation in China. There is an even stronger case for a tighter monetary policy and a more accelerated pace of the yuan's appreciation. Inflation is likely to surprise us on the upside and the trade surplus of $113 billion since August 2005 is flooding the economy with cash. It will be hard for the authorities to find effective ways to slow down the economy without addressing the problems of excess liquidity."

The chair of CNOOC said that China's energy consumption was eight times that of Japan and four times that of the US.

China's oil imports, the driving force behind record crude oil prices, might have stabilized and could decline within the next three years on government measures to conserve fuel.

Shipments would stay at 130 million metric tons a year before dropping, helping global prices to ease in the long term. The policies on energy saving will take three to five years to implement. "I feel confident that energy imports will not be as much as we thought before."

If China does slow down and ADB's predictions on the other main countries like India, Europe and the US are correct, then we can expect a weakening in demand for all resource materials. Gold may not necessarily follow the downtrend, as it is not an industrial metal but a hedge against inflation, war and a weakening dollar.

The war in the Middle East will continue for the least another two weeks and negotiations so far are not meeting with any success. Unless a European contingent can be stationed 30 miles inside Lebanon, rockets will continue to fall on Northern Israel.

The ghost month starts this week but I do not believe that Filipino Chinese are as superstitious as their Chinese antecedents, so I do not expect any large drop in trading. Seasonally, July and August are usually bad months anyway. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

Office of the President

BCDA

Bases Conversion and Development Authority

INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS

ASSET DISPOSITION PROGRAM - PHASE 3

The Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) is inviting interested proponents to participate in Phase 3 of BCDA's Asset Disposition Program (ADP Phase 3). ADP Phase 3 involves the development and privatization of the approximately 12,036 square meter - Expanded Big Delta Lots (formerly known as the Government Center for Investment) located in Fort Bonifacio.

Interested proponents may submit their Letters of Interest to BCDA and can purchase the Terms of Reference (TOR) for ADP Phase 3 that outlines, among others, the requirements that will enable proponents to participate in the privatization.

The TOR for ADP Phase 3 will be ready for distribution to interested proponents starting on 21 July 2006 at the BCDA office. A non-refundable cost of the TOR is Ten Thousand Pesos (Php10,000.00), for each TOR, payable to the BCDA in Cash or Manager's Check.

A conference among interested proponents is tentatively set on 09 August 2006. The objective of the conference is to discuss the property that form part of ADP Phase 3, the TOR and other clarifications from interested proponents. Interested proponents will be informed of the final schedule and venue of the conference through contact numbers submitted to the BCDA.

Interested proponents can direct their inquiries to:

THE CHAIRMAN
ADP PHASE 3 COMMITTEE (ADP-3 Com)
Bases Conversion and Development Authority
2/f Bonifacio Technology Center, 31st St. cor. 2nd Ave.,
Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila

or they can contact Ms. Aileen R. Zosa or Ms. Bambie L. Andal at telephone numbers 816-6666 or 816-1043.

(Sgd.) **VICTOR V. ZABLAN**
Chairman
ADP Phase 3 Committee

(PDI–July 20, 26 & August 2, 2006)

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of July 25, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	1,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	31.5	32	31	31	2,937,400
Bank of the Phil. Islands	52.5	53	52	52.5	1,218,400
China Banking Corp.	850	860	850	860	1,160
Citystate Savings Bank	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	340,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	77.5	77.5	77.5	77.5	85,900
International Exch. Bank	41	41	41	41	100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	36.5	37.5	36.5	37	808,900
Philippine National Bank	34	34	34	34	8,100
Phil. Savings Bank	39	39.5	39	39.5	3,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	5,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	45	45	45	45	8,200
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	1.76	1.8	1.74	1.8	1,075,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	6,200
Manulife Financial Corp.	1605	1625	1605	1625	1,120
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	214	214	214	214	2,190
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1980	1980	1980	1980	350
Ivantage Corp.	1.28	1.3	1.28	1.28	2,639,000
INDUSTRIAL ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	43.5	43.5	43	43.5	30,300
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	45.5	45.5	45	45	152,200
Manila Electric Co. A	15	15	15	15	34,100
Manila Electric Co. B	24	24.5	24	24.25	1,094,000
Manila Water Co. Inc.	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.7	516,000
Petron Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	5,536,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	300,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.92	0.92	0.91	0.91	20,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3,000
CADP Group Corp.	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.7	40,000
Cen Azucar De Tarlac	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	8,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23.25	23.25	23.25	23.25	1,800
Jollibee Foods Corp.	32	32.5	32	32.5	431,100
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.15	3.55	3.15	3.55	4,122,000
San Miguel Corp. A	66	66	65.5	66	65,900
San Miguel Corp. B	72	72	71.5	72	42,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19	19.25	19	19	1,169,800
Vitarich Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.56	1.56	1.54	1.54	2,743,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.55	4.6	4.55	4.6	31,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	30,000
CHEMICALS					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	60,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.105	0.115	0.105	0.11	59,000,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	6,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	6,000,000
Ayala Corp.	405	405	400	402.5	113,330
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.3	354,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.023	19,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.82	1.82	2,250,000
APC Group Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	100,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	8,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	250,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	2,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	20,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	4,632,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4.2	4.25	4.2	4.2	5,409,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	12,000
Pacifica	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	6,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.18	0.195	0.18	0.18	4,400,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	100,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	540,000
SM Investments Corp.	221	223	221	222	82,200
South China Resources Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	260,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	12.5	12.75	12.25	12.5	2,030,800
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.06	1.02	1.04	2,952,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,600,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	12,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.22	0.235	0.22	0.225	13,800,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	40,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.45	4,280,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.038	0.039	0.038	0.039	500,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.32	1.34	3,863,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.2	0.205	0.2	0.205	490,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	100,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.38	1.4	16,559,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.21	0.215	0.21	0.21	3,550,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	30,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	1,050,000
SM Development Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.54	1.54	222,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	4,677,000
SERVICE MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	16.25	16.5	16.25	16.5	56,700
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	192,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.18	1.2	330,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	960	970	960	965	68,880
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.5	3.55	3.45	3.5	1,424,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1920	1935	1920	1925	131,520
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Ionics Inc.	2	2	1.84	1.84	70,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	2,400,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	1,000
Philweb Corp.	0.032	0.033	0.031	0.032	91,400,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	30,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	14	14	14	14	106,600
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	95,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	1,829,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.38	1.38	78,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	270,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	30,000
iPeople Inc.	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	160,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.16	2.16	2.12	2.14	650,000
Paxys Inc.	11.25	11.25	11	11.25	173,700
Prime Gaming Phils. Inc.	35	35	35	35	1,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	3.8	3.85	3.7	3.8	1,229,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	3.8	3.8	3.65	3.8	1,043,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	88,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.7	7.7	7.5	7.6	420,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	4,590,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	750,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	20,700,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	11,700,000
Omico Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.0095	0.011	3,096,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	3.95	3.95	3.85	3.95	1,536,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4	4	3.9	4	3,107,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	27	27	26.5	27	58,200
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	710,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	810,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	10,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	120,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	45,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.22	218,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	78,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	16.5	16.75	16.25	16.5	122,900
PREFERRED					
Ayala Corp. Pref. B	103	103	103	103	3,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series N	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	1,001,700

DISCLOSURES

ABRA Mining & Industrial Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Sept. 1, 8 a.m. at Lipcann, Bangued, Abra. Stockholders as of Aug. 8 are entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.

***

THE PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. will hold an investors' Briefing on Aug. 8, 3:30 p.m. at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

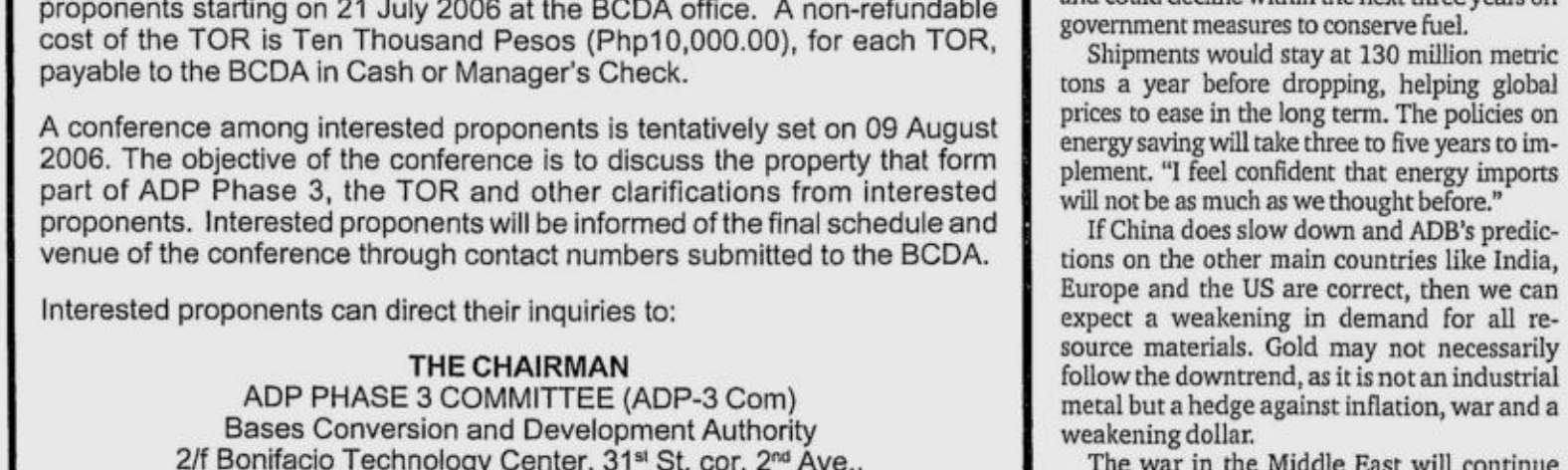
***

THE MANILA Water Co. Inc. will hold an analysts' briefing to discuss its second quarter results on July 31, 12 p.m., at its main office in Quezon City.

Compiled by Kate Pedroso, PDI Research

CURRENCIES

July 25, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.791766	1.000000	52.2010
Japan	Yen	0.006784	0.008568	0.4473
United Kingdom	Pound	1.465400	1.850800	96.6136
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.101808	0.128583	6.7122
Switzerland	Franc	0.635548	0.802697	41.9016
Canada	Dollar	0.693861	0.876347	45.7462
Singapore	Dollar	0.499159	0.630438	32.9095
Australia	Dollar	0.595940	0.752672	39.2902
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.100341	2.652731	138.4752
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.211120	0.266645	13.9191
Brunei	Dollar	0.497591	0.628457	32.8061
Indonesia	Ruplah	0.000086	0.000109	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020838	0.026319	1.3739
UAE	Dirham	0.215569	0.272264	14.2125
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.263000	65.9299
Argentina	Peso	0.256858	0.324412	16.9346
Brazil	Real	0.361520	0.456600	23.8350
Denmark	Kroner	0.134016	0.169262	8.8356
India	Rupee	0.016907	0.021354	1.1147
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.214454	0.270856	14.1390
Mexico	New Peso	0.072639	0.091743	4.7891
New Zealand	Dollar	0.492545	0.622084	32.4734
Norway	Kroner	0.125715	0.158778	8.2884
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013142	0.016598	0.8664
South Africa	Rand	0.112888	0.142578	7.4427
Korea	Won	0.000831	0.001050	0.0548
Sweden	Kroner	0.108011	0.136418	7.1212
Syria	Pound	0.015253	0.019264	1.0056
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024112	0.030453	1.5897
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000369	0.000466	0.0243



Yield of T-bonds drops to 8.75%

By Michelle V. Remo

THE YIELD OF THE THREE-YEAR Treasury bonds dropped 162.5 basis points yesterday to settle at 8.75 percent.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the decline in the interest rate could be attributed to growing demand for debt instruments from emerging markets as investors see an end to the successive rate hikes in the United States.

An increase in US interest rates makes bonds issued by emerging economies like the Philippines less attractive, thus leading to higher interest rates.

The volume of bids yesterday was huge at P17.805 billion, more than double the P7 billion that the government wanted.

Cruz said that aside from the expected end to US interest rate hikes, the lower-than-expected budget deficit of the national government also contributed to the healthy appetite for the three-year bonds.

"This is an indication (of optimism) resulting from a good fiscal position," Cruz said in a press briefing yesterday after the bond auction.

Earlier, the national government reported that its budget deficit in the first half of the year stood at only P31.5 billion, much lower than the P90.4-billion ceiling set for the period.

The lower-than-programmed deficit was attributed to increased revenue collection and tight spending.

The fiscal performance in the first semester put the government on track to meeting its full year budget deficit target of P125 billion, down from last year's deficit of P146.8 billion.

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12 months	3.50%	3.57%	3.63%	4.00%

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites suppliers/ manufacturers/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project/ Brief Description	Supply and installation of various Gym and Recreational Equipment for the SPC Recrational and Sports Center 3rd Floor Bldg B, Security Plant Complex, BSP East Avenue, Q.C., per BSP floor plans and standard technical specifications, as follows: 1. One (1) unit Heavy-Duty Motorized Treadmill 2. One (1) unit Multi-Press Machine 3. One (1) unit Dual Adjustable Pulley 4. One (1) unit Smith Machine 5. Two (2) units Olympic Bench Press Set 6. Two (2) units Flat Bench 7. One (1) unit Recumbent Indoor Rowing Machine 8. One (1) unit Elliptical Cross Trainer 9. Eighteen (18) units Large Aerobic Steps 10. One (1) lot Barbell Plates (various weights) 11. One (1) set Steel Plate Racking for 6 sets of various sizes of barbell plates rubber-coated 12. Six (6) sets 5' Olympic bars, straight black oxide finish with collar, rubber coated steel and cap, pressed-in maintenance free bushing on rotating barrels, medium knurl chrome, easy curl with insert number plate 13. One (1) lot Dumbbells (various weights) 14. One (1) unit Steel Cabinet or racking for Dumbbells 15. Two (2) sets Table Tennis tables w/ accessories (4 rackets one dozen balls, two nets, four clamps, etc.) 16. One (1) lot Billiard Tables w/ accessories (complete with billiard cloth, one set billiard balls, 4 pcs. billiard cues, 2 pcs. billiard cue rack, one pc billiard triangle, 1 pc. billiard cue bridge, one dozen billiard chalk, 1 pc billiard plastic table cover) 17. Four (4) Chess Tables w/ accessories (complete with 8-chairs, 4 chess sets, 4 chess clocks) 18. One (1) pc. Standard Pool Table w/ accessories (complete with 12 pcs. wooden chips, 4 pool cues, one box pool powder) 19. Two (2) sets DartBoard w/ accessories (complete with 6 sets of dart pins, two (2) scoreboards and other accessories)
Approved Budget for the Contract	1. P 597,000.00 2. 140,000.00 3. 400,000.00 4. 234,000.00 5. 57,000.00 6. 106,000.00 7. 135,000.00 8. 415,000.00 9. 144,000.00 10. 336,000.00 11. 55,000.00 12. 72,000.00 13. 170,000.00 14. 40,000.00 15. 39,000.00 16. 185,000.00 17. 32,000.00 18. 51,000.00 19. 7,000.00

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar project within the last five (5) years amounting to at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	26 July - 10 Aug. 2006, up to 2:00 p.m.
2. Pre-bid Conference	11 Aug. 2006, 3:00 p.m.
3. Opening of Bids	29 Aug. 2006, 2:00 p.m.
4. Bid Evaluation	) These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods
5. Post-qualification	) allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR)-A of
6. Notice of Award	) R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003.

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P500.00 or 0.05% of the total ABC's of items to be bid out, whichever is higher, to the BSP Cashier.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.
Chairman

(PDI–July 26, 2006)

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P.O. Box 2102 MCPO, Tel. Nos. 893-6001 to 47/893-1320 Fax No. 840-1575

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following project:

Engagement of Downhole Video Logging Services for the Workover of Wells in LGPF and SNGPF
EDC 06-100

The approved budget of the project is **US$558,000.00** or **PhP29,668,860.00**. The contract duration is **six (6) months**.

Application forms for eligibility and the bidding documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at Fort Bonifacio starting **July 19, 2006** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Pesos: One Thousand (P1,000.00)**.

Interested bidders may start submitting their application for eligibility on **July 19, 2006**.

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **July 28, 2006, 10:00 a.m.** at the Bidding Room, First Floor, Building 5, PNOC-EDC, Fort Bonifacio.

Application for eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group, First Floor, Building V, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City **not later than 2:00 p.m. (Contracts Administration Group Office Wall Clock Time)** of **August 15, 2006** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

(Sgd.) **FRANCIS M. DOLOR**
BAC Chairman

(PDI–July 26, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ORIENTAL NEGROS
Dumaguete City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
FOR THE SUPPLY OF FINANCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES TO FLOAT LGU BONDS

1. The Provincial Government of Oriental Negros intends to issue Local Government Bonds to fund its income generating project and requires the assistance/advise of a consultant in the floatation of said bonds;
2. The service fee is 3% of the total amount floated not to exceed P5,000,000.00 which is the Approved Budget Cost (ABC) for said services, for a duration of 365 days and further conditioned on a "No cure no pay basis".
3. Interested bidders are invited to submit letters of intent for *eligibility and short listing*. The deadline for submission shall be on or before August 8, 2006. Only bidders who submit the required documents within the aforesaid period shall be included in the short list and be issued with documents.
4. The criteria for short listing are:
   a. The consultant/adviser must be a duly registered proprietorship, partnership, corporation or joint venture as deliend by RA 9184.
   b. Must have at least successfully floated 3 LGU bonds in the last 3 years.
   c. Agrees to provide consultancy services contingent on the successful bond issuance,
   d. Must submit aside from the required eligibility documents, a list of key personnel with curriculum vitae.
5. A pre-bid conference is scheduled on August 15, 2006 at 10:00 A.M. at the Governors Conference Room, Mezzanine. The opening of bids is scheduled on August 29, 2006 at the PGSO office. Only proposals from short listed consultants will be opened and the process for the eligibility check is contained in the Instruction to Bidders. The contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who is determined as such during post qualification.
6. In the evaluation, the QBE procedure will be used with the following criteria and rating:
   a. Technical capability of personnel,
   b. The experience, proficiency and quality of performance, in other words, the over-all track record of the consultant,
   c. Plan of approach and methodology used.

The Provincial Government of Oriental Negros reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any required formality and award the contract to the bidder whose bid as evaluated is the most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) ATTY. ISMAEL P. MARTINEZ
BAC CHAIRMAN
Provincial General Services Officer
Capitol Area, Dumaguete City
Tel. No. (035) 226-1008/225-2433

(PDI–July 19 & 26, 2006)

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5209

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

Shaffer Parts under FDB 63444
Approved Budget: PHP 4,500,000.00

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Ms. Rosanne Bongco** starting **July 19, 2006** and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **July 27, 2006, 2:00 p.m.** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Wall Clock Time)** of **August 8, 2006**. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

(Sgd.) Francis M. Dolor
Bids and Awards Committee I

(PDI–July 19 & 26, 2006)

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Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late **Remedios G. Daba** was self adjudicated by heir as Per Doc. No. 190, Page No 38, Book No. IV, Series of 2006 before Notary Public Cesar R. Santiago of Makati City (7/10/06).

(PDI–July 12, 19 & 26, 2006)

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20-Hour water cutoff in Manila

SOME AREAS OF MANILA WILL HAVE NO water for 20 hours starting at 11:30 p.m., Thursday, July 27, until 7:30 p.m., Friday, July 28.

The water service interruption is due to the insertion of a 700mm butterfly valve on the existing 750mm CIP mainline along Algeciras St. corner Simoun St., Sampaloc, Manila.

The areas that will have no water for 20 hours are the following: Along España St. and lateral streets; along Algeciras St. and lateral streets; along PNR track; Estero de San Lazaro; Mayhaligue St.; Sulu St.; Lope de Vega St.; Quezon Blvd.; San Lazaro General Hospital; Nicanor Reyes Hospital; SM City San Lazaro; along Rizal Avenue between Antipolo St. and Quiricada St., including lateral streets; along Quiricada St. between Rizal Avenue and Yakal St. including lateral streets; along Pureza St. (North of R. Magsaysay Blvd.) and lateral streets; along J. Fajardo and lateral streets; along Ma. Clara and lateral streets; along Gov. Forbes; and Earnshaw St.

The repair and maintenance works are part of Maynilad's continuing program to upgrade and improve its water service to its customers in the West Zone.

Affected customers are advised to store water good for the duration of the water service interruption. They may also call Maynilad Water Hotline 1626 or text Maynilad through SMART 7001626 for the water-rationing schedule.

OBITUARIES

Roldan | Villareal

ADELINA "INDAY" ROLDAN-VILLAREAL

Joined our Creator at age 84
on July 25, 2006.

We, the family – her husband, **Achilles**; children, **Daphne** and **Edwin** (†), **Deenette** and **Noi-Noi**, **Richelieu (Ricky)** and **Assumption (Baby)**, **Perseus (Dodie)** and **Bridget**; brothers **Leopoldo** (†) and **Napoleon** (†) and sisters **Corazon** (†), **Josefa** (†) and **Milagros**; grandchildren, great grandchildren and relatives request for your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Doña Juana Rodriguez Ave., New Manila, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Saturday, July 29, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. at the Loyola Memorial Chapel, Guadalupe, Makati.

NORA MERCADO ITURRALDE BANAAG

of Palm Coast, USA & Batangas City
Died on July 18, 2006 at the age of 56 in St. Pölten, Austria.

Her bereaved husband, **Demy**; children, **Nicky** & **Stephie**; sisters & brothers-in-law, **Belen** & **Ariel** (†), **Alice** & **Rene**, **Bella**, **Marcia** & **Willie**, **Fe**, **Edna** & **Nestor**, **Emma** & **Emil** (†); aunt, **Ate Goring**; uncle, **Nimrod**; nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains will be flown at the San Fernando Funeral Homes, Kumintang Ibaba, Batangas City on July 28, 2006.
Interment will be announced later.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave us His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have Everlasting life."
—John 3:16

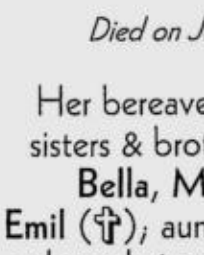
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.

Tel. Nos. Q.C.: 712-3001 • 743-6502; Mla.: 711-6931 to 35

NAME OF DECEASED	PLACE OF VISITING	INTERMENT/CREMATION DATE & TIME	INTERMENT/CREMATION PLACE
DR. VICENTE P. FUMAR SR.	Chapel B-8, Quezon City	July 27, 2006 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass	Himlayang Pilipino
HERMINIA M. RAMOS	Chapel F, Quezon City	JuLY 27, 2006 10:00 a.m.	North Cemetery

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
— 2 Corinthians 5:8

ATTY. CYPRES AGBAYANI-SANTIAGO



Peacefully joined our Lord
on July 23, 2006 at the age of 37.

Her bereaved husband **Douglas**; son **Daniel**; daughter **Chelsea**; mother **Priscilla**; brothers & sisters **Lorie**, **Ruth**, **Amor** and **Vita** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Prudential Memorial Homes, Maceda St., Sampaloc, Manila.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 29, 2006 at the Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City after the 8:00 a.m. funeral service at the Central United Methodist Church, TM Kalaw St., Manila.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
and bank-to-bank payments

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Surigao del Sur
MUNICIPALITY OF BAROBO

INVITATION FOR RE-BID

CONSTRUCTION OF BAROBO PUBLIC MARKET

"The Works include the General Requirements Site Works; Concrete Works; Masonry Works; Wood and Plastic Works; Thermal Moisture Protection Works; Doors and Windows; Finishing Works; Mechanical Works; and Electrical Works"

Loan No. 1843-PHI

1. The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank toward the cost of the Mindanao Basic Urban Services Sector Project (MBUSSP), and it intends to apply part of the whole of the proceeds of this loan, together with the GOP counterpart funds, to payments under the contract for the Construction of Barobo Public Market/012-05PM.
2. The Municipality of Barobo, Surigao del Sur, now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the construction of the New Barobo Public Market which has a total floor area of 1,713 sq.m. The works shall include the General Requirements; Site Works; Concrete Works; Masonry Works; Metal Works; Wood and Plastic Works; Thermal and Moisture Protection Works; Doors and Windows; Finishing Works; Mechanical Works; and Electrical Works. Completion of the Works is required within 305 calendar days.
3. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with relevant procedures for open competitive bidding as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," to the extent it is consistent with Asian Development Bank's procurement procedures and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries as defined in "Guidelines for Procurement Under Asian Development Bank Loans".
4. The documents required in the Eligibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the instructions to the Bidders.
5. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), Municipality of Barobo, Surigao del Sur; and inspect the Bidding Documents at the, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on July 19, 2006 to August 17, 2006.
6. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below, and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Six Thousand Pesos (Php 6,000.00). The bidding documents shall be received personally by the bidder of his authorized representative on or before August 17, 2006, 5:00 pm.
7. The BAC, Municipality of Barobo will hold a pre-bid conference open to all Eligible Bidders on August 3, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. at the Municipal Budget Office, Barobo, Surigao del Sur.
8. Eligible bidders must submit their Bids to the BAC, Barobo, Surigao del Sur on or before August 18, 2006 @ 2:00 p.m. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee and in the amount of Four Hundred Sixty Thousand Pesos (Php 460,000.00) or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on August 18, 2006 @ 2:00 p.m. at the Municipal Budget Office, Barobo Municipal Hall, Barobo, Surigao del Sur. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. To be considered eligible and qualified a Bidder must:
   a. has a successful experience as prime contractor in the construction of at least one (1) work of a nature and complexity equivalent to the works in the last five (5) years, such being verifiable from completion certificates. To comply with this requirement the single contract cited should be at least Fifteen Million Pesos (Php 15.00M)
   b. have a minimum average annual construction turnover over the last three (3) years equal to Nineteen Million Pesos (Php 19.00M)
   c. submit audited balance sheets or, if not required by law of the applicants country, other financial statements acceptable to the Procuring Entity, for the last five (5) years to demonstrate the current soundness of the applicants' financial position and its prospective long-term profitability.
10. Completion of the Works is required within 305 Calendar Days.
11. The Municipality of Barobo, Surigao del Sur, reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Attention: MS. MINA U. RONQUILLO
Municipal Budget Office
Municipal Hall, Barobo, Surigao del Sur
Contact No. 0917-703-6340

(Sgd.) MINA U. RONQUILLO
Municipal Budget Officer
BAC Chairman

(PDI--July 19 & 26, 2006)

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PROCUREMENT SERVICE

Room 507-508, 5th Floor Mabini Building, DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, Philippines
Website: http://www.deped.gov.ph; e-mail: deped_procurementservice@yahoo.com.ph
Direct Line: 636-65-43 / Telefax: 636-65-42, 633-93-43 Trunk Line: 632-13-61 Locals: 2085/2115

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
(Re-bid)

The DepED-Bids and Awards Committee (DepED-BAC) invites eligible bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for Printing and Delivery of the following:

Packages	Item No.	Items Quantity	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Pre-Bid Conference	Bid Submission deadline/ Opening of Bids	Venue	End user
A	1	Individual Health Cards (Elementary) 3,000,000 pieces	Php 2,250,000.00	July 25, 2006 2:30 p.m.	August 08, 2006 2:30 p.m.	Bulwagang Karunungan DepED Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City	Health and Nutrition Center (HNC)
B	1	Individual Health Cards (Secondary) 1,866,667 pieces	Php 1,400,000.00				
	2	Health Examination Cards (Form 86) 50,000 pieces	Php 133,500.00				
	3	Teacher's Oral Health Cards 50,000 pieces	Php 75,000.00				
C	1	Albendazole (1,000,000 Tablets)	Php 5,900,000.00	July 25, 2006 1:30 p.m.	August 08, 2006 1:30 p.m.		

Bids received that exceed the ABC per item shall be rejected.

The Bidding Documents shall be available at the BAC Secretariat, Procurement Service, Room 508, 5th Floor, Mabini Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, starting on **July 19, 2006** upon payment in cash of the non-refundable fee of **PhP 2,000.00** for both packages A & B, and another **Php 2,000.00** for package C to the DepED Cashier.

Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with procedures under the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Information is also available at **http://www.deped.gov.ph** or **www.procurementservice.org** or call DepED-PS at telephone no. 636-65-43 or fax no. 636-65-42.

DepED-BAC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, or declare failure of bidding at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected parties.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. CAMILO MIGUEL M. MONTESA**
Assistant Secretary and BAC Chairperson

(PDI–July 19 & 26, 2006)

ISABELA - 1 ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Victoria, Alicia, Isabela
Tel. No. (078) 6627103 • 6627983 • 6627810
Fax No. (078) 6627103 • 6627917

The Isabela – I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Iselco – 1) wishes to invite interested suppliers for Public Bidding for the supply and delivery of Electrical Materials and Equipments as follows:

Schedule 1 : Pole Line Hardwares
Schedule 2 : Special Equipments
Schedule 3 : Wires and Cables
Schedule 4 : Poles and Crossarms

Interested parties may secure bid documents and checklist of qualification requirements at the office of the PBAC Secretary at Finance Manager's office or contact Mr. Rodolfo Acosta at Cel. No. 09192699574 or Engr. Romeo M. Villacampa at Cel No. 09189226973.

The schedule of Bidding activities are as follows:

PARTICULARS	DATE/TIME
Publication	July 25 - 27, 2006
Issuance of bid documents/checklist of qualification requirements	July 28 - Aug. 21, 2006 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Pre-Qualification conference	Aug. 22, 2006 10:00 AM - 12:00 NN
Submission of bids/Opening	Aug. 22, 2006 / 1:00 PM

Checklist of Qualification Requirements are the following: (To be submitted during the pre-qualification conference)

1. Non-refundable bid documents fee in the amount of Three thousand pesos only (P 3,000.00) in the form of cash.
2. Complete set of legal documents of the company, i.e., SEC Registration, Articles of Incorporation and by laws, company profile, business registration and license papers.
3. Audited Financial Statement (Balance sheet and Income Statement) duly filed/ stamped received by BIR.
4. If represented by an agent of the firm, it must have a letter of Authorization from the President/Management or Owner.

The ISELCO – 1 reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect thereon and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the cooperative (ISELCO – 1), The ISELCO – 1 likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **Mr. Vicente B. Del Rosario, CPA**
OIC / General Manager

(PDI--July 25, 26 & 27, 2006)

Philippine Economic Zone Authority

Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis Street, Pasay City, Metro Manila, Philippines
Telephones (632) 5513438 • 5513454 • Facsimile (632) 5513436
E-mail: info@peza.gov.ph • Website: www.peza.gov.ph

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

1. The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), through its Corporate Operating Budget for CY 2006 intends to apply the sum of PhP 252,000.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF CURRENT TRANSFORMERS FOR THE CAVITE ECONOMIC ZONE**. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The PEZA now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the supply and delivery of the following outdoor use window type current transformers:
   a) Ratio: 400 : 5A — 6 pcs.
   b) Ratio: 600 : 5A — 15 pcs.
   c) Ratio: 800 : 5A — 21 pcs.
   d) Ratio: 1,200 : 5A — 6 pcs.
3. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents ITB.
4. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/ sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last three (3) years with an amount of at least 50% of the ABC and at least five (5) years in the Supply and Delivery of Current Transformers and is able to supply, install and configure the proposed brand. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
5. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below.
6. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from 19 to 28 July 2006, Mondays to Fridays, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of P1,000.00 and submission of a certified copy of their G-EPS Certificate of Registration. The method of payment will be cash basis only. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
7. The PEZA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference to those who secured the Bidding Documents on 03 August 2006, 2:00 p.m. at the 6th Floor, Social Hall, PEZA Building, Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City.
8. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 11:00 a.m. of 16 August 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of GSIS Surety Bond in the amount of not less than 2.5% of the ABC or in the form of cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit in the amount of not less than *1% of the ABC*. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
9. Bid opening shall be on 16 August 2006, 2:00 p.m. at the 6th Floor Social Hall, PEZA Bldg., Roxas Blvd corner San Luis St., Pasay City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
10. In case any of the above dates is declared a special non-working holiday, it will automatically be reset on the next working day.
11. The PEZA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat
3/F PEZA Building, Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City
Tel. No.891-6444 / Telefax No. 551-9587
e-mail: peza_bac_secretariat@yahoo.com
website: www.peza.gov.ph

THE CHAIRMAN
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--July 19 & 26, 2006)

REWARD PhP 200,000.00

For information leading to the RECOVERY of my children.

A Petition for Habeas Corpus is now pending at the Regional Trial Court, Branch 19, Cagayan de Oro City, for the following children:

Hannah Rose Alpers
6 years old (DOB: 08/16/1999)

Joshua Stewart Alpers
3 years old (DOB: 09/26/2002)

Sarah Susan Alpers
9 years old (DOB: 11/17/1996)

Alias last names used may be **MADELO** or **CUBERO**.

Contact #s **(088) 857-1864** or **0921-326-7434.**

(PDI–July 23, 24, 26 & 29, 2006)

More Classified Ad:

BCDA B4

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Regional Field Unit No. 5
San Agustin, Pili, Cam. Sur

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Agriculture Regional Field Unit No. 5, San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur was requested by Hon. Mario Joyo Aguya, Party-List Representative, AKBAYAN to purchase organic fertilizer of specified guaranteed analysis for distribution to identified cooperative/peoples organization in the region. As such, DA RFU 5 is inviting interested suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and delivery of 5,263 bags of ORGANIC FERTILIZER [Total N%-3.0, Total P_2O_5%-4.8, Total K_2O%-4.0, Calcium, ppm-7-4, CaO, ppm-10.4, Magnesium ppm-1.2, MgO, ppm-1.8].

The Approved Budget for the Contract is Four Million Nine Hundred Ninety-Nine Thousand, Eight Hundred Fifty Philippine Pesos (PhP4,999,850.00) chargeable to the Priority Development Assistance Fund of said Representative.

Interested suppliers may apply for eligibility by submitting required eligibility documents in two (2) sets starting July 12, 2006. Copy of schedule containing the list of eligibility documents is available at BAC Secretariat, Legal Office.

Bidding documents containing details of the procurement shall be made available and may be obtained by eligible contractors from BAC Secretariat, Legal Office starting July 14, 2006 until the close of office hours of July 26, 2006, upon payment of non-refundable amount of Php5,000.00 and Annual Suppliers Accreditation fee of Php500.00 to the Cashier's office.

Pre-bid Conference shall be held on July 28, 2006 at *9:30 in the morning* at *DA RFU 5 Library, Crop Research Building*. Deadline for submission of bids will be on 9 August 2006, at 9:00 in the morning. After which, bids will be opened. All submitted bids must be in duplicate.

Each bid must be accompanied by bidder's bond equivalent to any of the following based on the Approved Budget for the Contract -- 1% (Cash/Certified Check/Cashier's Check/Manager's Check, irrevocable letter of credit); 1.5% (Bank Guarantee); 2.5% Surety Bond, preferably GSIS, callable on demand.

The DA reserves the right to reject and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract when (a) there is a prima facie evidence of collusion between the BAC and any of the bidders, or if the collusion is between a bidder and a third party, including any act which restricts, suppresses or nullifies or tends to restrict, suppress or nullify competition (b) the BAC is found to have failed in following the prescribed bidding procedures; or (c) for any justifiable and reasonable ground where the award of the contract will not redound to the benefit of the government as follows: (i) if the physical and economic conditions have significantly changed so as to render the project no longer economically, financially or technically feasible as determined by the head of the procuring entity; (ii) if the project is no longer necessary as determined by the head of the producing entity; (iii) if the source of funds for the project has been withheld or reduced through no fault of the procuring entity.

Further, the DA RFU 5 assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder any expense or loss that may occur in participating to this undertaking.

For more details, see or call the Legal Office, (Tel. No. 477-33-56) DA RFU 5, San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur or visit our web site (http://bicol.da.gov.ph) or the government procurement service, DBM web site www.procurement service.org

10 July 2006, Pili, Camarines Sur.

(Sgd.) **BALAGTAS J. TORRES**
Regional Executive Director

(PDI–July 26 & Aug. 1, 2006)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
MANILA

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR REGISTRATION OF UNLAD PILIPINO AS A DULY ACCREDITED POLITICAL PARTY

SPP NO. 05-003

UNLAD PILIPINO represented by its Secretary-General AGAPITO A. AQUINO
Petitioner.

PETITION FOR REGISTRATION

PETITIONER UNLAD PILIPINO by counsel unto the Honorable Commission, respectfully states:

1. This is a petition for registration as a political party under Article VIII of Batas Pambansa Blg. 881 as amended by UNLAD PILIPINO, an organization of Filipinos who are committed to good government, fighting and eradicating graft and corruption and maintenance of peace and order in the country.
2. The petitioner shall be officially known as **UNLAD PILIPINO** and it will be commonly known as UNLAD with party headquarters and official address at 3rd Floor, Solid Mills Building, Dela Rosa Street, Legazpi Village, Makati City.
3. It was organized on April 7, 2005 in Makati City with the following individuals enumerated hereunder as organizers/founders of the Party and their respective addresses are as follows:
   a) BENJAMIN C. AGARAO - Sta. Cruz, Laguna
   b) AGAPITO A. AQUINO - 5756 Kalayaan Ave., Pinagkaisahan, Makati City
   c) ANGELITO BANAYO - 7 P. Burgos, Butuan City, Agusan Del Norte
   d) AILEEN MARIE O. GAMO - No. 51 Bonifacio Drive, I Barangay I, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon
   e) GREGORIO D. GARCIA - 331 Bunga St., Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City
   f) TEODORO GENER, JR. - Norzagaray, Bulacan
   g) PANFILO M. LACSON - Room 517, Senate of the Philippines Financial Center, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City
   h) SALVADOR C. MALANA - 10 Main Ave., Extension, San Gabriel Village, Tuguegarao City
   i) SOTERO C. MENDOZA - Marikina Heights, Marikina City
   j) ARMANDO P. PADILLA - 18 Sta. Rosa St., Magallanes Village, Makati City
   k) CARLOS M. PADILLA - 77 Dupan St., Solano, Nueva Vizcaya
   l) MA. DOMINGA B. PADILLA - 22 Rocha St., San Lorenzo Village, Makati City
   m) RUTH R. PADILLA - Dupax, Del Norte, Nueva Vizcaya
   n) RICHARD R. REYES - Bongao, Tawi-Tawi
   o) ROLEX T. SUPLICO - Villa Paterno Subdivision, Estancia, Iloilo
   p) RONALDO B. ZAMORA - San Juan, Metro Manila
   q) FRANCISCO ZUBIA - Baler, Aurora
4. Subsequent to the organizational meeting, elections of Party Officials were held and the following were elected:

Chairman	-	Panfilo M. Lacson
Secretary-General	-	Agapito A. Aquino
Deputy Secretary-General-Luzon	-	Carlos M. Padilla
Deputy Secretary-General-Visayas	-	Rolex T. Suplico
Deputy Secretary-General-Mindanao	-	Angelito T. Banayo
Deputy Secretary-General-Metro Manila	-	Ronaldo B. Zamora
Treasurer	-	Armando P. Padilla
General Legal Counsel	-	Johnmuel R.R.D. Mendoza
National Communications Director	-	Gregorio D. Garcia

5. Furthermore, the herein enumerated party members were chosen to constitute the National Council which is the highest policy making body of the Party:

BENJAMIN C. AGARAO	-	Sta. Cruz, Laguna
AGAPITO A. AQUINO	-	5756 Kalayaan Ave., Pinagkaisahan, Makati City
ANGELITO BANAYO	-	7 P. Burgos, Butuan City, Agusan Del Norte
AILEEN MARIE O. GAMO	-	No. 51 Bonifacio Drive, Barangay I, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon
GREGORIO D. GARCIA	-	331 Bunga St., Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City
PANFILO M. LACSON	-	Room 517, Senate of the Philippines Financial Center, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City
ARMANDO P. PADILLA		18 Sta. Rosa St., Magallanes Village, Makati City
CARLOS M. PADILLA	-	77 Dupan St., Solano, Nueva Vizcaya
MA. DOMINGA B. PADILLA	-	22 Rocha St. San Lorenzo Village, Makati City
RUTH R. PADILLA	-	Dupax, Del Norte, Nueva Vizcaya
ROLEX T. SUPLICO	-	Villa Paterno Subdivision, Estancia, Iloilo
RONALDO B. ZAMORA	-	San Juan, Metro Manila

6. During the organizational meeting of the Party, the members thereof unanimously adopted and approved the Party's Constitution and By-Laws, and its Program of Government. Copies of which are hereto attached as Annexes "A" and "B" respectively.
7. Moreover, during the said meeting, the Party Secretary - General AGAPITO A. AQUINO was authorized to cause the registration and accreditation of UNLAD PILIPINO before the Honorable Commission. A copy of the Secretary's Certificate attesting on the different resolutions adopted by the Council during the April 7, 2005 organizational meeting, which included the one authorizing the Secretary General to cause its registration, is hereto attached an Annex "C".
8. UNLAD PILIPINO is not a religious sect or denomination nor does it adhere to the establishment of one national religion. It is not supported by, nor does it accept financial contribution from, any foreign government, multilateral and bilateral financial agencies. Moreover it is hereby attested that the party is of national constituency as evidenced by the list partial members coming from the different regions of the country that is attached hereto as Annex "D".
9. UNLAD PILIPINO shall not pursue its goals through violence, intimidation, terrorism and/or any other unlawful means. It shall undertake to obey all laws and legal orders promulgated by the duly constituted authorities.
10. Ultimately UNLAD PILIPINO shall uphold and adhere to the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines.

PRAYER

PREMISES CONSIDERED, it is respectfully supplicated that, after due notice, publication and hearing, this Petition be approved by the Honorable Commission and that, upon such approval, a Certificate of Registration as a political party be issued to UNLAD PILIPINO with all rights appurtenant thereto.

Other reliefs as may be deemed just and equitable under the premises are likewise prayed for.

Makati City for Manila, June 17, 2005.

JOHNMUEL ROMANO R.D. MENDOZA
General Counsel for UNLAD PILIPINO
IBP Lifetime Number 03729 Quezon City
PTR No. 0800502, Jan. 4, 2005, Marikina City
Attorneys' Roll Number 43719
3rd Floor Solid Mills Building, Dela Rosa Street,
Legazpi Village, Makati City, Metro Manila

SHARON E. MILLAN
IBP No. 652524 Tarlac Chapter
PTR No. 3051429 D, May 19, 2005 Makati City
Attorneys' Roll Number 50521
3rd Floor Solid Mills Building, Dela Rosa Street,
Legazpi Village, Makati City, Metro Manila

VERIFICATION

I, AGAPITO A. AQUINO, of legal age, Filipino, with office address at 5756 ABBA Building, Kalayaan Avenue, Pinagkaisahan, Makati City under oath, hereby depose and state:

1. I am the duly elected Secretary General of UNLAD PILIPINO, the petitioner in the above-captioned case with authority to sign this Verification/Certification as shown in Annex C hereof; as such I caused the preparation of; and have read the foregoing Petition. All the averments in the said petition are true and correct of my own knowledge, experience and belief, and from available authentic records.
2. Furthermore, I hereby certify that the petitioner has not commenced any action or filed any claim involving the same issues and party in the foregoing Petition in any court, tribunal or quasi-judicial agency, and to the best of our knowledge, no such other action or claim is pending therein. If we should learn that the same or a similar action has been filed or is pending, we shall report that fact to this Honorable Commission within five (5) days from notice.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NAUGHT.

AGAPITO A. AQUINO
Affiant

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 17th day of June 2005, Marikina City, Metro Manila, affiants exhibiting to me their Community Tax Certificate No. 14629186 issued on January 11, 2005 in Makati City.

ATTY. JOHNMUEL ROMANO R.D. MENDOZA
Notary Public until December 31, 2005
PTR No. 0800502, Marikina City
IBP Lifetime Roll No. 03729 Quezon City
Attorney's Roll No. 43719, May 6, 1999
No. 14 Mahogany Park I, Marikina Heights,
Marikina City, Metro Manila

Doc. No. 150;
Page No. 31;
Book No. II;
Series of 2005.

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

FIRST DIVISION

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR REGISTRATION OF UNLAD PILIPINO AS A DULY ACCREDITED POLITICAL PARTY,

SPP No. 05-003 (PL)

UNLAD PILIPINO represented by its Secretary-General AGAPITO A. AQUINO,
Petitioner,
x----------x

NOTICE

1 ATTY. JOHNMUEL ROMANO R.D. MENDOZA
ATTY. SHARON E. MILLAN
General Counsel for UNLAD PILIPINO
3rd Floor, Solid Mills Building, Dela Rosa Street,
Legazpi Village, Makati City, Metro Manila

2. MR. AGAPITO A. AQUINO
Secretary-General of UNLAD PILIPINO
5756 ABBA Building, Kalayaan Avenue
Pinagkaisahan, Makati City

3. UNLAD PILIPINO
Headquarters and Official Address:
3rd Floor, Solid Mills Building, Dela Rosa Street,
Legazpi Village, Makati City, Metro Manila

GREETINGS:

Attached is a copy of the **O R D E R** of the Commission *(FIRST DIVISION)* in the above entitled case dated July 18, 2006.

Manila, 19 July, 2006.

FOR THE DIVISION:
MA. JOSEFINA E. DELA CRUZ
Clerk of the Commission

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

FIRST DIVISION

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR REGISTRATION OF UNLAD PILIPINO AS A DULY ACCREDITED POLITICAL PARTY,

SPP No. 05-003

UNLAD PILIPINO represented by its Secretary-General AGAPITO A. AQUINO,
Petitioner,
x----------x

ORDER

Acting on the verified petition for registration of "UNLAD PILIPINO" as a political party with national constituency, and conformably with Sections 5 and 6, Rule 32 of the Comelec Rules of Procedure, petitioner is hereby ordered to cause the publication of herein petition, together with the notice of hearing in three (3) daily newspapers of general circulation at its own expense.

Let this case be set for hearing on **02 August 2006** at 10:00 o'clock in the morning, at the Comelec Session Hall, 8th Floor Palacio del Gobernador, Intramuros, Manila.

SO ORDERED.

Given this 18th day of July 2006, at Manila, Philippines.

FOR THE DIVISION:
RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Presiding Commissioner

(PDI - July 26, 2006)

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 26, 2006
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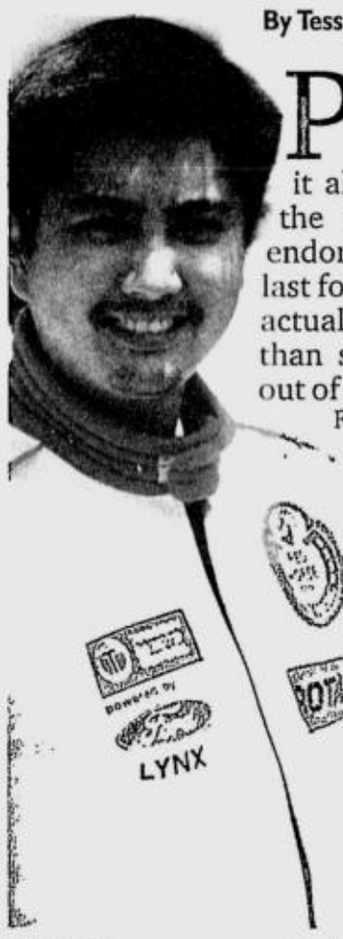
Poch, JP and the art of (not) hydroplaning

POCH Ramirez

By Tessa R. Salazar


JP Tuason

POCHOLO RAMIREZ, THE Philippines' own racing and rally legend, has seen it all. And though he's been on the commercial spotlight lately endorsing fuel that's supposed to last for thousands of kilometers, he actually knows much, much more than straining the last millimeter out of your fuel.

For this week, INQUIRER MOTORING has coaxed him out of his usual low-profile silence (he lets his skills do the talking) to ask him about his driving experiences in the rain throughout the years (a quite apt topic at that, since the onset of this year's rainy season once more underscores the importance of driving safely on wet and flooded roads).

Tito Poch, as what the industry fondly calls this living legend, the wise sage that he is, begins by recounting one of his countless road trips abroad. On a long drive from Pisa to Rome in Italy, on a rainy day, he saw five accidents in just an hour of driving.

He knew right away what caused the accidents. "We saw these puddles that made cars prone to sliding."

Uncontrollable skidding

Sliding, or aquaplaning or hydroplaning, is a situation where a vehicle finds itself uncontrollably skidding on a wet surface. What causes this? A sudden application of the brakes, even at moderate speeds, can make the tires lose grip of the road surface and make them "glide," or slip over, the film of water on the road. It's like your tires suddenly turning into surfboards or skim boards. And we all know you can't steer a 1,000-pound surfboard with your feet and some body English.

Tito Poch knows all too well the psychology of driving on the wet. Drivers caught unaware of a puddle suddenly appearing straight ahead would tend to panic and slam on their brakes. "What they are doing," Tito Poch rues, "is how accidents take place."

Tire treads are designed to disperse water from beneath the tire so as to provide the grip on the road. But then, tires can lose optimum grip when the vehicle is moving too fast, the vehicle is imbalanced, the tire itself is underinflated or worn out, or if the puddle or water on the road is deep.

Advice from 2 racers

Tito Poch's cardinal rule in driving through puddles is, just keep your cool. Never slam on the brakes.

"When you see water, just slow down."

Tito Poch also stresses that drivers should be prepared to control their car as it comes out of the water.

Another racing legend, JP Tuason of the Tuason Racing School, offers valuable advice on this situation: "Don't slam on the brakes. Don't make sudden turns. Drive right through it and hold the steering wheel straight."

Tuason advises motorists to try to drive more on the center of the road during a heavy downpour to avoid accumulated water on the roadside.

He also urges motorists to check their tires' treads, especially during the wet season. The risk of hydroplaning increases significantly when "bald" tires are used.

"Tires become prone to aquaplaning if it has less than a third of the tread left compared to brand new ones," Tuason says.

According to him, service centers offer free tire tread checkups, with technicians knowing if your tires are due for replacing. "A regular motorist wouldn't likely know if there is only a third left of the tire tread," Tuason quips.

Motorists are also asked to also take note of the correct tire pressures.

"If tire pressure is too low, the tire will not cut through the water efficiently," says Tuason.

Headlights on

Another tip, he says, is to always turn your headlights on during a heavy downpour so you could be noticed by other drivers. Headlights are not just about seeing but also about being seen.

Be also sure your rearview and side view mirrors are correctly positioned and clear.

The driving experts share one final advice, then.

Don't tailgate, especially during rains. And if you feel the vehicle behind you is driving too close, shift lanes or drive slower so you don't have to make sudden stopping moves and catch the tailgater off-guard.

Driving tips for rainy days

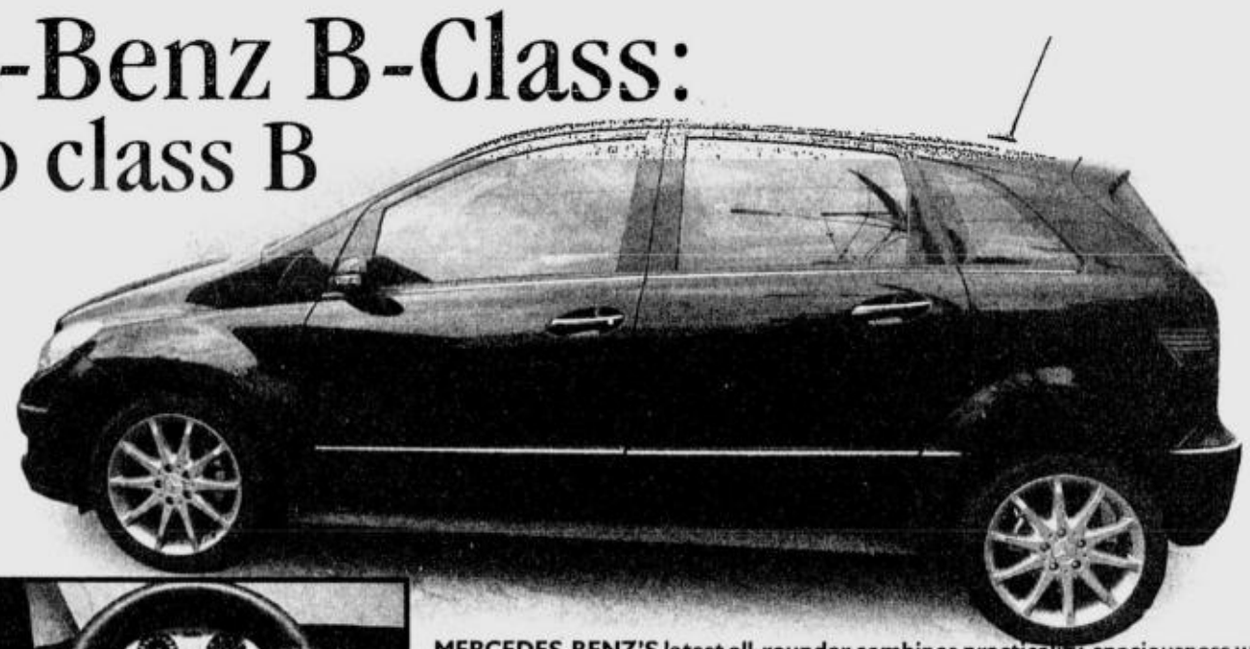
TO KEEP YOUR RAINY DAY DRIVE A SAFE experience, Hyundai Asia Resources Inc. (Hari), the exclusive distributor of Hyundai automobiles here in the Philippines, gives you these easy driving reminders:

- **Check your vehicle's brakes, wipers, headlights, brake lights and windows.** Make sure they are all in working order and if not, have them checked. A simple problem such as a broken taillight can cause major accidents, especially in a heavy downpour.
- **Remember to slow down when the rain sets in.** Not only are the roads slippery, but potholes and other road hazards tend to show up and double up in number in this driving condition.
- **Avoid tailgating.** Maintain a relatively far following distance because it takes longer to stop on wet surfaces. This might also help you avoid accidents should one occur right in front of you.
- **Allot more travel time so you would not have to rush to your destination.** Give yourself a few extra minutes as traffic really does slow down during the rain.
- **Do not use your mobile phone while driving.** Keep both hands on the wheel and your eyes and mind alert to what's happening on the road, not on your phone. If you really need to use the phone, safely pull over.
- **Don't drive when you're sleepy.** The lulling sound of raindrops will put you right to sleep! Pull over and wait till you can manage or better yet, have someone drive for you.
- **Remain calm when experiencing skidding and hydroplaning, the most common mishaps during rainy days.** Do not step hard on the brakes because this will just cause your vehicle to be more uncontrollable. Maintain focus and slowly ease your foot off the gas until you get control of your wheels again.
- **Keep abreast with the latest road conditions.** Listen to traffic news for accidents and traffic jams. Avoid unfamiliar areas and areas that flood up to avoid being stuck on the road for a long period of time.

Should any of the unexpected troubles happen to you on the road, need not worry because Hari is just always around the corner to extend help. With more than 20 authorized Hyundai dealerships situated in strategic places nationwide, you can be assured that you need not go far to find assistance.

Mercedes-Benz B-Class: Certainly no class B

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

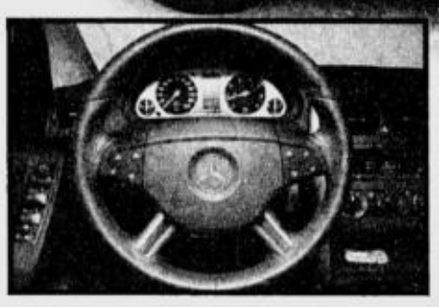

MERCEDES-BENZ'S latest all-rounder combines practicality, spaciousness with style and performance and has a wide range of standard safety features, giving drivers and passengers peace of mind.

"THIS IS A MERCEDES?" IS PROBABLY your first reaction to seeing a B-Class, a compact sport tourer that Mercedes-Benz explained is a new breed of "crossover" designed for those who want a roomy vehicle for their family, or their outdoor and sporting lifestyle.

"Think of the B-Class as a blending of hatchback, minivan, and compact sport utility vehicle," described Felix Ang, chair and president of CATS Motors Inc., the brand's exclusive distributor here in the country.

Indeed, the B-Class is a long hatch that could sit five passengers in relative comfort—six in a pinch—thanks to its ample leg and headroom.

Like a downsized minivan, the B-Class has a taller stance and with a rear lift gate that opens up to a very spacious cargo compartment (and like in most minivans its front passenger seat as well as its rear seats could be configured or even removed to allow bulkier loads).


INSIDE THE B-CLASS is all Mercedes-Benz class: superb fit and finish and use of high-quality materials.

Dynamic and athletic

And just like a compact SUV, the B-Class' interior appointments, overall package highlighted by its wedge-shape body, projects a dynamic and athletic character.

"What makes the B-Class special is the combination of space, quality and atmosphere. In addition to the ample room that it provides, the plastics, fabrics and leathers employed are of superior quality. The feeling is airy, open and sporty, thanks to big windows and a number of visual allusions to its dynamism: sporty aluminum pedals to a muscular crease that runs all the way from the front wheel arch to the tail lamp," described CATS Motors marketing communications manager Andros Villaraza.

Along with a powerful yet efficient 116-horsepower, 1.7-liter, 4-cylinder gasoline engine (a 136-hp, 2.0-liter variant is also available), newly developed Autotronic continuous variable transmission, the latest safety systems and an innovative suspension design, the B-Class provides a driving experience that is responsive and comfortable.

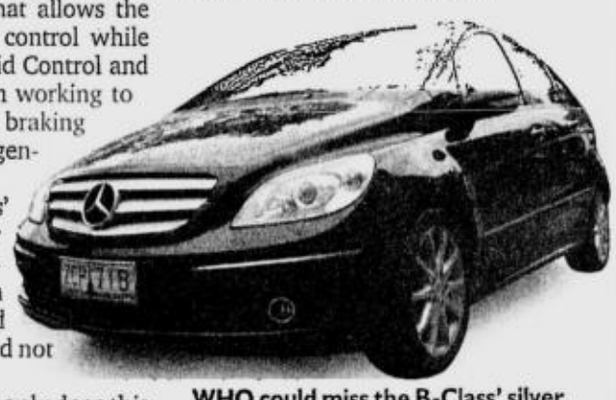
More justification

If you're looking for more justification of the B-Class' price tag (P2.250 million), you'll find it in the extensive standard safety features that not only include the head/thorax side airbags, adaptive belt force limiters and projection-beam headlamps, but also the most advanced handling features like the Electronic Stability Program (that keeps the vehicle on its intended path during a turn, to avoid sliding or skidding), Antilock Braking System (that allows the driver to retain steering control while braking), Acceleration Skid Control and Brake Assist System (both working to substantially reduce the braking distance during emergencies).

Moreover, the B-Class' so-called sandwich floor design allows for its engine and other drive-train components to be located under the vehicle floor and not in the nose of the car.

Ang explained that not only does this design give the B-Class passengers much more legroom—this layout also provides incomparable safety that in the event of a frontal collision, the engine and other parts slide under the cabins floor rather than into the cabin, endangering its occupants.

No wonder the B-Class was rated "safest small family car" in a recent car safety report carried out by a United Kingdom consumer magazine.


WHO could miss the B-Class' silver horizontal slits, its integrated Mercedes star, the arrowed front end and the striking contour of the bonnet?

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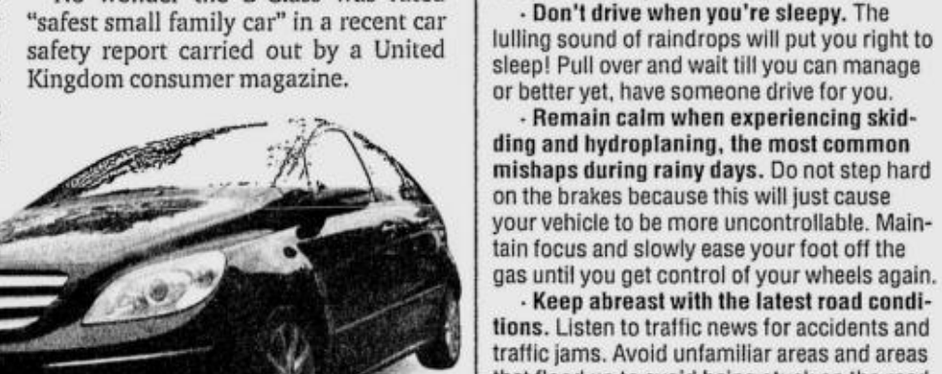

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Car manufacturers hit a rough patch

CONSUMERS HAVE THE RIGHT TO know what and how auto manufacturers are doing, even though the news may show them hitting a rough patch.

Take Toyota Motor Corp., the world's second largest carmaker by volume and Japan's biggest company. Over the years, Toyota has built a global reputation and won awards for excellent quality, but that reputation was dented when the police in Kumamoto, southern Japan, accused Toyota last July 12 of delaying the recall of defective Hilux Surf (a.k.a. the 4Runner SUV in the United States) models despite having received complaints about them as far back as 1996.

The flaw was in the steering assembly's relay rod, which Toyota admitted was prone to bend. The police said that the defect may have caused a Hilux Surf to swerve into oncoming traffic and collide head-on with another vehicle in Kumamoto in August 2004, injuring five passengers of the other vehicle, including three children.

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

Recalled

Two months later, Toyota recalled 330,000 Hilux Surfs in Japan manufactured between December 1988 and May 1996 and two pickups using a similar steering assembly, the T100 and the Hilux, a Japanese version of the Tacoma pickup in the United States. In September 2005, Toyota recalled affected models in the United States including the 4Runner. The 2004 recall involved more than a million vehicles sold in 180 nations including Europe and the United States.

At first, when the police charged three Toyota executives responsible for quality control with professional negligence, Toyota denied any wrongdoing, saying that the reported problems had not appeared serious enough to warrant a recall. But last Thursday, Toyota's senior management headed by president Katsuaki Watanabe held a news conference to show contrition for the recalls. No announcements of new cars were made, no press kits were distributed. Instead, Watanabe bowed in front of the cameras and said, "I want to apologize deeply for the troubles we have caused." And last Friday, Toyota executive vice president Masatami Takimoto apologized and bowed before a Transportation Ministry official in Tokyo after the ministry reprimanded Toyota and called for improved recall guidelines.

Investigation

Although Toyota was not fined or penalized, its case brings to mind the criminal investigation of Mitsubishi Fuso two years ago for covering up defects. But since Toyota has already recalled the faulty vehicle, analysts say that it may not suffer as much negative publicity and a consequent fall in sales. Toyota's image has been hurt this year by other recalls, such as that of 418,570 vehicles worldwide this month.

Meanwhile, Ford Motor Co., formerly the world's No. 2 auto manufacturer until Toyota overtook it, surprised investors last week by reporting a loss of $123 million in the second quarter, reversing a $946 million profit in the same period a year ago. Bill Ford, chair and CEO, had earlier announced plans to halve Ford's quarterly dividend as well as the fees paid to 12 board members.

Way Forward

Since a dividend cut was not in Bill Ford's "Way Forward" restructuring plan launched last January, analysts saw it as a negative signal of the company's future prospects and his goal to make Ford profitable in its crucial home market by 2008.

The second quarter loss follows Ford's US loss of $1.8 billion in 2005 and another $487 million in the first quarter of 2006. In a statement, Bill Ford conceded that higher gasoline prices in the United States have caused a shift in consumer purchases to smaller cars and crossover vehicles. As SUVs and pickup trucks are Ford's bread and butter products, its sales in the United States declined 9 percent in the first semester.

Restructuring

The 48-year-old great grandson of founder Henry Ford pledged to move "farther and faster" with his North American restructuring plan that was originally supposed to close 14 plants and eliminate up to 30,000 hourly jobs by 2012. Aside from North America, Ford's sales also fell in Europe and the Asia-Pacific. Ford lost $1.2 billion worldwide in the first quarter this year. Its Premier Automotive Group, which includes luxury marques Land Rover, Jaguar, Volvo and Aston Martin, posted a pretax net loss of $162 million compared with a year-ago pretax profit of $17 million.

Hyundai Motor Co., which produced 1.68 million vehicles in South Korea last year, has also lost a billion dollars. A partial strike since June 26 by Hyundai's labor union forced the suspension of vehicle exports and production cuts worth about $1.3 billion. The crisis is aggravated by the arrest last April of Hyundai chair Chung Mong Koo on embezzlement and breach-of-trust charges. Chung, 68, was released on bail on June 28 and returned to work last week after a 15-day stay in a hospital. Despite the strike and Chung's legal problems, the prospects of South Korea's biggest auto manufacturer remain good after posting a first-half operating profit of 950 billion won. *(Sources: AFP, AP, ASWJ, IHT, NY Times, Reuters)*

Steady metal from Fuji Heavy

FORESTER

WE ALL KNOW WHAT IT IS LIKE when something we value disappears. Imagine yourself having grown to accept and love a brand, like say a favorite soft drink or sneaker label, then you wake up one day and realize that said trademark is no longer available. One goes into some sort of withdrawal—something that in fact increases one's need for a fix.

During the '90s, Fuji Heavy Industry's Subaru brand was available in local showrooms. To most this might have just been another quirky, niche Japanese manufacturer whose cars still used horizontally opposed, four-cylinder engines and had all-wheel drive across the limited line. A few though, knelt and prayed in thanks. These were the ones who recognized what these cars were about, competition-bred ability and pace in a package that did not scream blatant aggression.

MY DRIFT

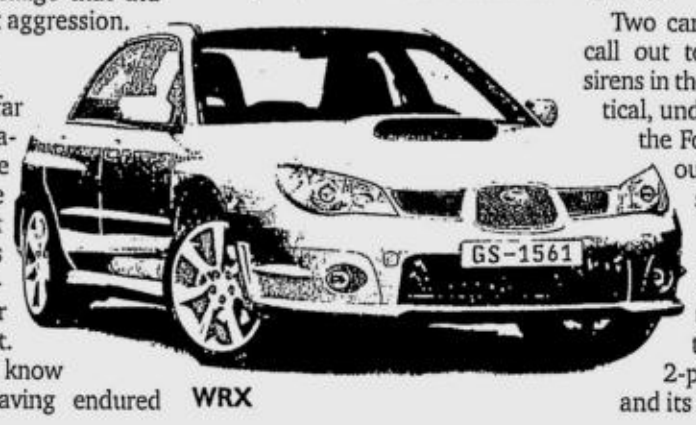
Andre Palma

Reappearance

It would not be far from the imagination that the same faithful are once again thankful that the six visible stars of the Pleiades constellation grace our automotive market. These fervent few know who they are—having endured years of scrounging for parts and home garage fixes—just to keep their Scooby's in some sort of working order. This story should be as much about them as is it as about the reappearance of the brand, as their actions speak of brand loyalty closer to obsession than just run-of-the-mill satisfaction.

Just what do these star-struck faithful find special in their vehicles? The answers are simple. Having had the opportunity to own a 2.0-liter 1998 Legacy wagon myself, two factors stand out. These cars are robust, to say the least, and that the grip these vehicles display, through their rally-inspired all-wheel-drive systems, is just confidence inspiring.

Just how robust? Let's just say that it took a direct, broadside hit from a wayward AUV to send my Legacy into the automotive hereafter. I spun thrice and wound up among the display shelves of a provincial bakery. Bent and broken beyond feasible repair, it has to be said that the wagon was still driven home despite the damage. I still miss my car, especially when the skies open up and rain puddles pockmark the roads. These "pedal to the floor pan" sessions in the driving rain are moments that I remember, owing much to the graceful all-weather gait of my dearly departed Subaru.



WRX

Sirens

Two cars in the current lineup call out to me like scantily-clad sirens in the summer surf: the practical, understated dynamo that is the Forester XT and the "flat-out, even while standing still" Impreza WRX.

Critical to the Impreza's acceptance as a true tool of the rally trade are the combination of a turbocharged 2-plus liter, boxer engine and its all-wheel-drive system. Through sleet, snow, steppe, gravel, tarmac and mud, the WRC iteration of the Impreza, the car's apex of evolution, is still taking the fight straight to the European powerhouses, clear confirmation of world-class aptitude.

Appeal

It takes a little more thought to see the appeal of the Forester XT, yet once everything is made clear, the everyday practicality of such a vehicle makes it seem the sane, composed alternative to an all-out grip and speed machine. This tamer, more mature image is practically only sheet metal deep with the Forester. Under the conservative lines of this soft-roader lie the basically the same genetics as its speed-bred sedan sibling. The interesting thing is: space and comfort are also concepts not alien to this sports wagon on stilts.

The Impreza is a true rally replica, just begging to be had in that irresistible shade of WRC Blue—a poster child for what the entire brand stands for. The Forester on the other hand, while still retaining the fundamentals necessary for fun, allows one to at least keep a pall of maturity and sobriety. With these two vehicles, it is all just really a matter of how one wants to answer their personal craving for performance and ability.

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Saving on fuel

THERE IS NO TIME MORE PRESSING FOR us to heed the need for oil conservation than today. Again, the urgent call of the times is to use fuel wisely. I say that in lieu of the ongoing Israel-Lebanon armed rift, not to mention the nearly five-year-old Iraq War. We all know that the world still largely depends on its oil needs from the Middle East and Arab countries.

We can begin by carefully scheduling our car trips from hereon. Car-less days, color coding aside, have to be a must-do now. Carpools, a practice in even cash-rich countries like America, must now be adopted here, especially among our Makati-bound workforce.

The liter of gas/diesel you save will redound to the benefit of national survival.

Almost any armed conflict that hits the Middle East/Arab world triggers price tremors of oil in the world market—at times at alarming proportions, such as the one we are experiencing now. The current high costs of gas-diesel-LPG have caused us tremendous pain, hurting both the family budget and the national economic standing.

Sadly, it will remain that way since we are a hostage to our own inability to discover oil of commercial value. The Malampaya oil drilling in Palawan seems to be our only saving grace, hope if you will, even as Malampaya's full potential has yet to be harnessed.

Let's contribute to fuel conservation. Begin by walking more than driving your car. At night, switch off that light when watching TV.

* * *

The small cars are being noted as steadily staging a glorious comeback, what with the prohibitive prices of gasoline and diesel.

Whereas before, the fad was to go SUV, if not gaudy with vans like the gas-guzzling Expedition, today, we seem to always see the roads in the metropolis being dotted with bantams like the Getz, Picante, Pride, Jazz, Vios and City.

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

In short, go small and slash to half your fuel consumption.

Notice that the huge chunk of car buyers today include our office workers in the big city, who are now more prone to acquiring their first car than investing on house and lot. Must be that we are now saturated with easy-to-own-car loan deals being offered by almost every bank?

And what about the now extremely obvious proliferation of motorcycles nationwide? Today, you see those ubiquitous motorbikes in almost every public road in the whole archipelago.

Well, it is no secret that motorbikes are absolutely gas-misers, even when ranged against the most economical small car in the market.

While we are it, let me raise a glass to Honda, which recently inaugurated its P1.3-billion motorcycle plant in Batangas—with no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo as guest of honor.

Anything that has something to do with the establishment of a new company is good for the country, foremost of its positive impact on the national psyche is the automatic decrease of the nation's unemployment figures.

Here's to Honda, whose Jazz and City are acknowledged gas-misers already. I'm sure that Smiling Triumvirate at Honda—Arnel, Tin Tin and Sheryl—are again on Cloud 9.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Do your bit of gas-saving: Do your groceries on your way home from the office.

* * *

E-mail comments to menju@pldtdsl.net.

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WARNING Only units purchased in the Philippines with validated Philippine Warranty Card will be serviced.

NEC Philippines at 10:

Celebrating a Ubiquitous World

NEC Philippines celebrates its 10th year in the Philippines this year. To commemorate its successful decade in the country, NEC Philippines will hold a special event marking the company's milestones culminating in its present vision of a Ubiquitous World.

"We are very pleased at being ubiquitous at 10 and growing. What better way to connect with our global vision of a Ubiquitous World," said Doy Santos, EVP & Country Manager of NEC Philippines.

NEC envisions a Ubiquitous World where anyone can share information anytime, anywhere. NEC aims to achieve this by providing services, products and technological innovations across industries, in both the public and private sectors.

In the Philippines, NEC has provided products and services to a diverse client base. Among NEC Philippines' clients are Philippine Seven Corporation, Philippine National Police, Philippine Association of Provincial Telephone Companies, Honda Cars Manufacturing, Makati Shangri La, Marco Polo Hotel, Petron Corporation, Globe Telecommunications, Smart Telecommunications, Air Transportation Office, ABS CBN and many more.

These companies use various NEC technologies like NEC Retail and POS solutions, NEC Servers and Notebooks, NEC Private Automatic Branch Exchange (PABX), NEC Key Telephone Systems, NEC Biometrics solutions like Advanced Fingerprinting and Identification System, etc.

NEC Philippines also recently launched NECare Center, its 24/7 support center that not only provides after sales and warranty support, but also offers other services like IT integration, project management and other IT- and networking-related services.

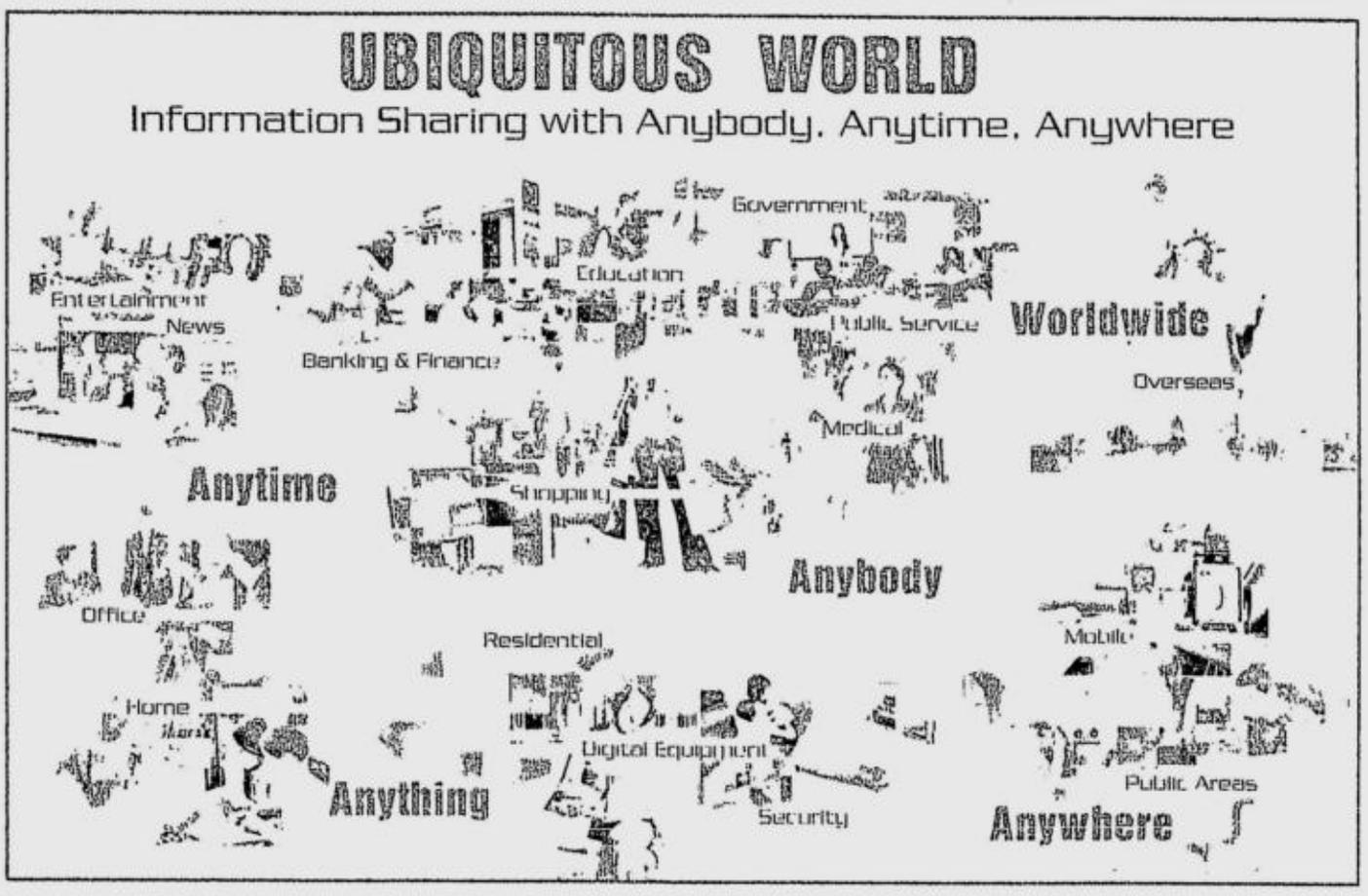
NEC Philippines is the local subsidiary of NEC Corporation and was incorporated in 1996. It officially started operations in April 2004, though prior to this, NEC was already present in the Philippines through its Manila Representative Office since the 1960s.

From the beginning of telephony to broadband Internet technology, NEC Corporation, as a global company, has devoted more than 100 years of technological innovation to serving people around the world. As of the end of fiscal year 2004, NEC's 105th year, NEC Corporation posted a net sales of close to US$43 billion, with a total manpower complement of over 148,000 employees coming from 249 consolidated subsidiaries from all over the world.

There are eleven NEC-consolidated subsidiaries in the Philippines: NEC Topan, NEC Tokin, NEC Manila Project Office, NEC Business Coordination Centre Singapore Manila Representative Office, NEC Technologies Hong Kong Manila Office, NESIC Philippines, NEC Logistics Philippines, NEC Mobiling Manila Branch, NESIC Telecom Construction Philippines, NEC Telecom Software Philippines & Japan Aviation Electronics Philippines.

However, it is NEC Philippines, Inc. that is the local subsidiary of Information and Communications Technology Giant NEC Corporation of Tokyo, Japan.

NEC Philippines is primarily a sales, marketing & services company engaged in the supply of telecommunications equipment, computer systems, network, IP and Data Networks, ICT Integration, IT solutions and services, among others.



Message

Mr. Tomohiro Yagi
Chairman
NEC Philippines

Congratulations to the management and staff of NEC Philippines for being part of NEC's 10 shining years in the Philippines. In behalf of the NEC global family, I commend you for steering NEC into becoming a well-recognized and influential information technology company in the Philippines today.

As the local subsidiary of NEC Corporation you have done your share exceedingly well in promoting our vision of creating a Ubiquitous World: Information Sharing with Anybody, Anytime, Anywhere.

We know that the global business environment has become so tough that only the strong, the innovative and the visionary can stand the chance to make a difference and stay on top. There are a whole new set of new opportunities but these opportunities will be in sight only for those who open their eyes to the realities of the present and the promise of the future.

It is my hope that NEC Philippines would continue to work in providing innovative information solutions that are not only cost-efficient and of excellent quality to Filipino organizations, but more importantly, in personally guiding these organizations in achieving their goals.

Again, congratulations!

May we have an even more fruitful decade ahead of us.

Signed:
MR. TOMOHIRO YAGI
Chairman
NEC Philippines

Message

Mr. Doy Santos
EVP & Country Manager
NEC Philippines

This year, NEC Philippines is celebrating a decade of excellence in providing innovative information technology solutions. As the local subsidiary of NEC Corporation of Japan, one of the world's leading IT companies, NEC Philippines has helped provide a truly ubiquitous environment for organizations and individuals by utilizing the best out of useful technologies to improve business and personal productivity.

We have helped both public and private sector organizations fight crime, reduce fraudulent transactions, manage sales and inventories, improve business processes, reduce costs and increase revenues, among many other roles.

We have also provided technologies that enabled individuals to be in touch with colleagues, family and friends and be entertained.

As we mark our 10th year in the Philippines, we shall make the market become more aware of our capabilities by redefining and communicating NEC's market position as a provider of information technologies that enable information sharing for anyone, anytime, anywhere.

To the management and staff of NEC Philippines, congratulations!

Together, let us look forward to another decade of success and innovation.

Signed:
MR. DOY SANTOS
EVP & Country Manager
NEC Philippines

Point-Of-Sale System – 7-Eleven Foodstores (Convenience Store Chain)

In a move to further improve its business operations, Philippine Seven Corporation, master franchiser of the 7-Eleven chain of 24-hour convenience stores in the country, has adopted NEC's point-of-sale (POS) system that is meant to respond more effectively and efficiently to the demands of today's more demanding breed of consumers.

The move is expected to translate to better sales and more responsive customer care that will include provision of a one-stop, round-the-clock on-line repayment and purchase services ranging from utility bills to credit card transactions.

Jason Ngo, Management Information Systems (MIS) manager of PSC, said the company started testing NEC Philippines' latest generation POS system to allow store operators and franchisees alike to analyze customer buying habits and preferences at the store level, which in turn will serve as guide to replenish inventories in time and come up with relevant promotions.

"NEC's POS system allows us to manage inventory item by item. Now, store operators and franchisees can evaluate the movement of goods from our shelves on a more timely basis for better and faster fine-tuning of our overall sales strategy and inventory management," Ngo said.

Biometrics

In 1969, NEC started developing an Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS). AFIS is a system using biometrics that is now revolutionizing crime laboratory work and speeding up resolution of cases.

Biometrics is the revolutionary technology now widely used for both civilian and criminal identification security systems and crime detection work. It authenticates unique body demographics such as fingerprint, and enables an almost instantaneous identification.

Today, NEC's biometrics technology has effectively raised the bar in crime prevention and detection.

NEC has already successfully implemented in the Asia region the biometric or e-passport systems of Singapore and Thailand. NEC has also been responsible for the National ID of Singapore.

For correctional facilities management, it is also NEC's technology that is installed in Singapore's Prison Management System and Hong Kong's Prison Verification System.

The National ID System of South Africa, which boasts a whopping 45 million records, is also powered by NEC's biometrics technology.

Q-Master – MiSys

Leading global software and products solutions provider MiSys chose NEC's Q-Master Contact Center Solution to provide 24/7 support service to its more than 1,200 customers worldwide. MiSys is among the top 5 banking software providers in the world and it relies on NEC's Q-Master to power its global customer support center based in Makati City.

Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) – Philippine National Police

After an evaluation of international crime detection technologies in the market, the PNP has adopted NEC's Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS), which is acknowledged as one of the world's most efficient among computerized solutions.

Biometrics is the revolutionary technology now widely used for both civilian and criminal identification security systems and crime detection work. It authenticates unique body demographics such as fingerprint, and enables an almost instantaneous identification.

The PNP Crime Laboratory attributes the early resolution of several cases resulting from the use of AFIS.

The PNP believes that AFIS will reach its full potential in the next five years when the data base is made more complete and the system is adopted nationwide. The PNP hopes to utilize the many benefits of NEC's fingerprint technology to help in speeding up crime resolution and in minimizing the backlog of unresolved cases.

Philippine NECare Center

NEC provides 24/7 support through NECare, NEC's maintenance and support organization. Through NECare, NEC is able to guarantee 24/7 support for organizations running the company's information technology solutions.

NECare was conceptualized to ensure that organizations with 24-hour operations, like convenience stores and call centers, are running smoothly all the time.

According to Doy Santos, country manager & EVP of NEC Philippines, the company finally joins the ranks of other NEC subsidiaries in the region with the launch of the Philippine NECare Center

"The NEC Philippines NECare Center will provide a service menu at par with the service menus of its counterparts in the region. It will also be equipped to provide 24/7 support to its client base and is staffed by highly qualified engineers whose experience span the range of NEC's product offerings," Santos explained.

Transmitters – ABS-CBN/Amcara

NEC Philippines has been providing analog VHF and UHF Transmitters to leading broadcast companies such ABS-CBN and its sister company Amcara since 1999. NEC's transmitters allow the networks to broadcast their programs to major cities like Cagayan de Oro, General Santos, Dagupan, Iloilo, Bacolod, Zamboanga, and Naga.

Radar – Air Transportation Office

Through a grant by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), NEC Philippines has provided the Air Transportation Office with the NEC Terminal Radar Data Processing System (TRDPS) at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. The radar system monitors incoming and outgoing airplanes within a certain radius.

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What it's like

You asked for it, so we're bringing it back.

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In the next issues, you will read about what it's like to be cheated on, what it's like to be a player, what it's like to go abroad for your internship, what it's like to be in a coma, what it's like to be handicapped for six months, what it's like to find yourself in a mental institution, what it's like to fight against discrimination.

And that's just the beginning. The world is full of stories. What's yours?

Young Casanova

By Benjamin Joseph D. Collado III
2bU! Contributor

IT'S ABOUT WAKING UP IN THE morning with a bad hangover and being hit by a very familiar feeling that you went overboard again last night.

It's about a one-night stand with a girl you met at a party, sneaking out of her room before she wakes, checking your things if something was missing, looking for her phone and purposely deleting your number from her phonebook.

It's about meeting a girl at a bar and offering her a ride home. It's about asking her if she wanted to go someplace private so you can talk—when both of you are aware that you have a different "talk" in mind.

> What it's like to be a player in the game of love—or a reformed one

It's about meeting your ex again after quite some time and noting how much better she looks now than she did before. It's about pushing the right buttons for her to give in. And finding yourself in bed with her without strings attached, all the while being grateful to your friend who told you it's good not to burn your bridges with your exes.

It's about seeing a girl and finding ways for you to meet her. With pickup lines being overused, you have a better chance of getting her number by having a friend go over and ask her politely if he can have his friend over there introduced to her. It's about texting with her the whole day, getting to know her, showing that you have a genuine interest in her, sharing sweet nothings on the phone and forwarding her cheesy quotes that work almost all the time.

It's about having your friend, your partner-in-crime, the Robin to your Batman—or whatever you want to call him—validate to her all your pledges of devotion and loyalty.

It's about perfecting the art of lying. Telling your girlfriend it was just you and the boys last night—go ask Robin. And not bothering to tell Robin what to say because he already knows the routine.

It's about keeping your girlfriend happy. Giving her gifts and surprises so she won't suspect your wayward ways.

It's about not caring if your girlfriend broke up with you because she caught you cheating. There are other fish in the sea, you say. You're better off a free man, free to do anything you

YOUNG/ C2

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Young Casanova

From page C1

pleased without worrying about getting caught.

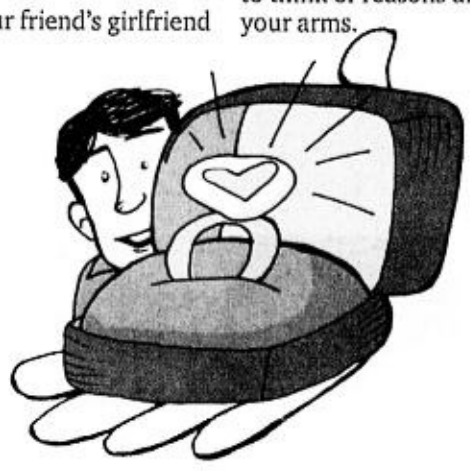
It's about asking the girl you just met out for a date. Convincing her that you're for real. Making her forget about the warnings her friends gave about you.

It's about doing anything so you can bring her home tonight. And if everything else fails, it's always a good idea to have a plan B.

It's about saying the L word without breaking eye contact. Making her believe that you really mean it and that you're starting to fall for her. That's plan B.

It's about thinking of ways to break up with her if she starts to get clingy. Thinking of the standard breakup lines and wondering if she'll buy it.

It's about rushing to your friend's girlfriend with a shoulder to cry on. Telling her that everything's gonna work out fine. Comforting her one minute, making out the next.



It's about going out with your friends and partying all night. Drinking till dawn and playing around with girls.

It's about waking up in the morning with a bad case of hangover and a very familiar feeling that you went overboard again last night.

Deja vu.

Ugly cycle

It really is an ugly cycle. After years of a life like this, you begin to ask yourself if there is more to life than drinking all night and finding someone to hook up with. And in the morning when you wake up, no matter how much you soap yourself, you still have this uneasy feeling that you're still dirty.

Your friend has found a girl that he's serious about. When you go out with your friends, you find him taking a raincheck because he has to spend time with his girl. You and your friends wonder what has gotten into him. You even wonder if he's lost his mind. How can he even think about trading this kind of life? There's nothing better than a bachelor's life.

It's all fun and games the first few years. But after a while, you look at yourself in the mirror and find the traces of abuse you did to yourself. And if you don't change your ways, you fear that maybe someday you'll find yourself alone and lonely.

And after all the years of booze and girls, you can finally sum up your life in one word—empty.

Maybe it's not good to spend your life that way. Maybe your friend hasn't lost his mind, after all.

What you need is to find someone who can make you look forward to another day. Someone who, when you think about her, never fails to put a smile on your face.

Someone who makes you want to be a better man—to steal a line from *pareng* Jack Nicholson.

Someone who fills that emptiness in you, making you complete.

Before, when you used to wake up in the morning and find somebody in your arms, your first thought was how you could get rid of her without hurting her feelings. But now, what you need is a girl who makes you want to think of reasons and ways to let her stay in your arms.

Because when she's right there beside you, it is as if everything's okay. That nothing else matters but you and her.

You need somebody who makes you miss her so much that you buy a bottle of her perfume and spray it on your pillows so, when you go to bed at night, you can hug the pillow with her scent on it and wish that it was really her you were hugging.

You need somebody who makes your heart skip a beat when she smiles at you. Who makes you feel so comfortable and safe that you pour out your heart to her, unburdening secrets that you've kept for a long time. And having her tell you that it's okay, you have a new slate now, that you can leave everything where it belongs, in the past, and concentrate on what lies ahead of you.

You need someone who makes you listen more to love songs on the radio. Someone whom you pray for at night before you sleep. Someone you wish you'd dream about, for even while you sleep, you still want to be with her.

Someone whom you can finally look in the eye, without all the guilt and deceit, and tell her you love her. And you get this mushy feeling inside that tells you it's true. You want to shout over the rooftops, you love her, and she loves you! There's no better feeling in the world.

I have found my someone. I have found my all. I've been wanting to ask this for a long time now. And I think there's no better timing than now.

So here I am, down on one knee, asking you, my someone. Will you marry me?

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

Campus fixture

By Onegoldfish
2bU! Contributor

"WHERE DO YOU WORK?"

"I still go to school."

"Really? Second degree?"

" No, first."

"Ahhh..."

This school year, I celebrate my first time being a college junior. And since I've had to explain my story to every new person I meet, each new classmate wondering why my student number is different from theirs, every teacher who quizzically looks at this girl obviously standing out in a roomful of teenagers, I have the story down pat.

I'm 23 years old, and I'm still in college. No, I am not studying for a second degree, I haven't even finished one yet. I was thrice a freshman, twice a sophomore. I've been to two schools, two colleges, a GenEd course, two majors, and even took a year off. That's the gist of my college life.

Mind you, I was not kicked out of school, nor did I fail a single class. I had very good grades (well, with the exception of Math, Science, and Figure Drawing!). It's just that I was plagued with the age-old question: What do you want to be when you grow up?

Maybe there's a reason why our parents and teachers would ask us that when we were young. It's just too bad it took me more than the prescribed amount of years to make up my mind.

To say that my college life has been a roller-coaster ride would be an understatement. In seven-plus years on campus, I have had enough experiences to last me a lifetime!

I've met a lot of people from different walks of life. I believe each one has enriched my life in one way or another—from classmates oozing with talent to inspiring teachers, from groupmates who tended to slack off and think everything would just be fine, to activists extremely passionate about their advocacy, from drunks, posers and potheads to know-it-alls, and everything in between!

The world is filled with unique people (even people we would rather not share this planet with). Personalities are bound to clash, but it's up to us if we want to be stressed out or learn how to deal with and breathe through situations.

College has really been an experience. At times I'd feel so frustrated doing assignments and failing to remember mathematical equations or historical facts. Sometimes, I'd feel left out when I'm in the middle of classmates talking about crushes and adolescent issues. But then again, I feel that these conversations and interactions keep me young!

I do feel so jaded sometimes, especially when I browse through Friendster profiles and see classmates and friends getting new jobs, migrating abroad, getting married and raising their young families. When this happens, I feel as if everyone has moved on, while I'm trapped in this time warp and still stuck in school. Always, there is a twinge of jealousy and a sudden rush of doubt. Have I made the right decisions?

So what would have happened had I not transferred schools in the first place? Would it have been any better? Would I be basking in success by now? Would I be feeling fulfilled with a stable job, and happy with the career path I've taken?

I'll never know the answers for sure, but I don't think my life could have been necessarily better. So I'm stuck in college. This is not necessarily a basis of whether I'd be successful or not afterwards.

Getting a degree on time and finishing college in an X number of years does not indicate how you would fare in the real world. I've realized that college doesn't dictate who I am or who I will be.

The upside of being a 23-year-old in college is that you somehow have a better understanding of how things are. I have learned to look at things on a larger scale.

Swapping stories with friends, you impart whatever wisdom you have with them, and hopefully things will bring inspiration and direction to their young minds. In turn, I look forward to interacting with professors and absorbing anecdotes and insights that they impart with us. These experiences help broaden my horizons, inspire me to dream, and allow me to formulate my own opinions and ideals.

Yes, I still have my eye on the prize. I will get that diploma. I am two years shy from finally putting this issue to rest. A batchmate wrote in her blog, "It's not graduating on time. It's graduating when it's time."

I can't say for sure if I will be ready by then, but I can't wait to see what happens. When Graduation Day finally comes, we will celebrate like there's no tomorrow!

E-mail the author at one_goldfish@yahoo.com

Get back on track.

You want to stop smoking but you don't know how. You've tried walking away from it repeatedly, but there's always that irresistible craving that pulls you back in again. And you know that you should just say no. But every reason melts away in the face of such temptation.

Frankly, when the urges start kicking in - or when the withdrawal symptoms start acting up - they start influencing your judgments. There's no more thinking about what your family will think or how it'll affect your day-to-day activities. You are lost to your craving. And you just have to get your nicotine fix, regardless of consequences.

Clearing out the smoke

But what's the real deal with nicotine? Nicotine is known for being an addictive substance, and you usually hear about it in relation to cigarettes, so it doesn't have a very clean reputation. But in actuality, it is only one out of over 4,000 chemicals found in cigarettes and cigarette smoke. And though it's the substance that makes it so hard to stop smoking, studies have shown that nicotine does not cause cancer. It is the other ingredients that are mainly responsible for bringing physical damage to your body.

Better safe than sorry

What if there was a way for you to quit smoking, without having to worry about the withdrawal symptoms or uncontrollable urges?

You yourself can answer that, now that Nicorette (nicotine) gum, manufactured by Pfizer Consumer Healthcare, is already available in the Philippines.

Nicorette is a form of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) that has helped millions of smokers break free from their smoking habit. It is backed up by numerous clinical trials that confirm its safety and show that it is well tolerated, with only mild and temporary side effects. Nicorette gum delivers nicotine alone, in amounts enough to wean you off the addiction, and without the cancer-causing toxins and gases of cigarettes. Even the World Health Organization endorses NRT as both safe and effective and advocates its use for successful smoking cessation.

The chew and park technique

But how does it work exactly? You don't chew Nicorette like a regular gum. For it to be effective, you need to learn what's called the "chew and park" technique. Just remember these three steps:

First, chew on the gum when the urge to smoke hits you. This breaks up the gum and releases the nicotine into your mouth. Second, when the taste gets strong, let the gum rest between your gums and cheek so that your body can absorb the nicotine through the lining of your mouth. Third, start chewing again when the taste has faded. Repeat this cycle for about half an hour or until the gum loses its flavor before disposing of the gum properly.

The gum now becomes your source for the nicotine that your body looks for when you haven't smoked in a while. It'll satisfy your craving and ease your withdrawal symptoms, but not give you the harmful chemicals that may destroy your health.

As good as it gets

Time and time again, Nicorette has proven to be effective as a smoker's aid to giving up or cutting back on cigarettes. Since its inception 25 years ago, it has helped millions of smokers break their dependence on nicotine. NRT's efficacy is well documented: in over 100 clinical trials, smokers who used NRT were twice as likely to stop smoking as participants who used placebo. Nicorette doubles your chances of kicking the habit versus willpower alone. It directs you towards the healthier habits you've always wanted to keep. And it leads you toward a life that's richer and more meaningful than ever.

ADVT.

Gilda Cordero Fernando's book gets star-studded reading

"BAD KINGS," AN ANVIL PUBLISHING children's book by Gilda Cordero-Fernando, will be launched July 27, 6 p.m., 2/F, The Podium.

The launching will feature a reading of the first story by a cast composed of Joy Virata as narrator, Rio Almario as Horgle, Krip Yuson as the Bad King, Emily Abrera as the Lady Monster, Sheila Coronel as the Octopus, Napoleon Abueva as the Captain of the Guards, Rina Jimenez-David, and Ambeth Ocampo as a tree.

Costumes are by Wendy Regalado and Manny Chaves and direction is by Nonon Padilla.

Show will go on rain or shine.

BRIZEL, Fred, Barny, Razel, Rhea and Mikaela of Ballet Philippines

"All That Jazz" from Ballet Philippines

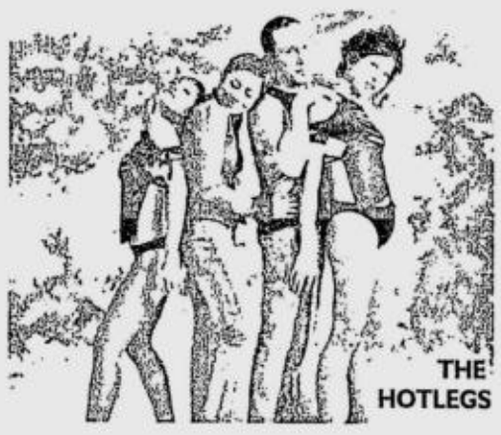
BALLET PHILIPPINES, ON THE OCCASION of its 37th season, presents "All That Jazz" Aug. 11 (8 p.m., Gala Night), 12 (2 p.m. and 8 p.m.) and 13 (3 p.m.) at the CCP Main Theater.

"All That Jazz" is a dance extravaganza performed to jazz classics like George Gershwin's well-loved "Rhapsody in Blue," "The Man I Love," "Summer Time," and "I Love You, Porgy," and the music of legendary jazz singers like Ella Fitzgerald, Lou Rawls and Louie Armstrong, as inspirations for the choreography.

Adding star wattage to the show are the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, Hotlegs, Reuben Laurente, Bituin Escalante and Pinky Marquez.

The Essenses Foundation and Metro Pacific Corporation support Ballet Philippines' "All That Jazz."

Call 5511003, 5510221 or 8326011, or visit www.ballet.com.ph



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Chew and park: 1. Chew a piece of gum when you feel the urge to smoke. 2. Chew slowly until the taste becomes strong and allow nicotine to be taken in through the lining of the mouth. 3. Then stop and rest the gum between gums and cheek. 4. When the taste fades, chew a few times until the taste gets strong then rest the gum again. Requires will power. Always read label. Ask your pharmacist and doctor for advice. Visit the Nicorette booth and www.nicorette.com.ph. Available without prescription only at mercury drug

We both had our share of harmless flings. But in a twisted way, those flings only made us realize how irreplaceable we were in each other's life

Six years going—gone

By Clementine
2bU! Contributor

DEAR JOEL,

I was in the fourth grade when I first fell in love with the idea of love. I remember that night well. I had just finished reading my latest Betty and Veronica Double Digest, and the ending was one of the few that actually allowed Betty to have the last laugh. As Betty and Archie snuggled in front of the fireplace, I remember thinking that that was what love was—someone reliable and dependable, someone you could run to at the end of the day.

Before I went to bed, I told God that I no longer wanted a Barbie Dream House or a My Little Pet Shop clinic. I wanted something bigger and better. I wanted someone to sweep me off my feet.

When I was 14, you came along, and we happened. I knew right away that you were different. You cracked funnier jokes, told more interesting stories, had better taste than the other boys. You were warm and friendly and reliable and dependable, and I guess I did get my wish, because you took a chance on me and ended up sweeping me off my feet.

When I look back at high school, I remember not so much the exciting firsts of being a teenager, or the fights I had with my parents over grades and curfew and hemlines, or the insane amount of attention everyone seemed to throw at me then.

I remember, instead, the hours we spent talking on the phone, and the moments when we would look at each other from across the room and know exactly what the other one was thinking. I remember, especially, the times when everyone's expectations would get to me and I would burst into tears, and you would be there—someone to run to at the end of the day—with your comforting clichés and amazing hugs, ready to make everything all right again.

But we've both heard too many sad endings about high school sweethearts, and, perhaps as a preemptive measure, we decided to break up right before college. We figured we could easily move on, since we would be going to different schools and meeting so many new people.

For a while, we both had our share of harmless flings. But in a twisted way, those flings only made us realize how irreplaceable we were in each other's life. I never thought we would get back together after high school, but we did. And this time, we said, we would make it last.

What we had during our college years was familiar and comfortable—a deep friendship, really, more than a romantic attachment. But somewhere along the way, something changed.

I want so badly to be able to pinpoint a certain moment when it all started going downhill and say, "That was where it all went wrong. Let's go back and undo the damage." Perhaps it would even be easier if this breakup was caused by a single, tangible reason—a third party, maybe, or a broken promise.

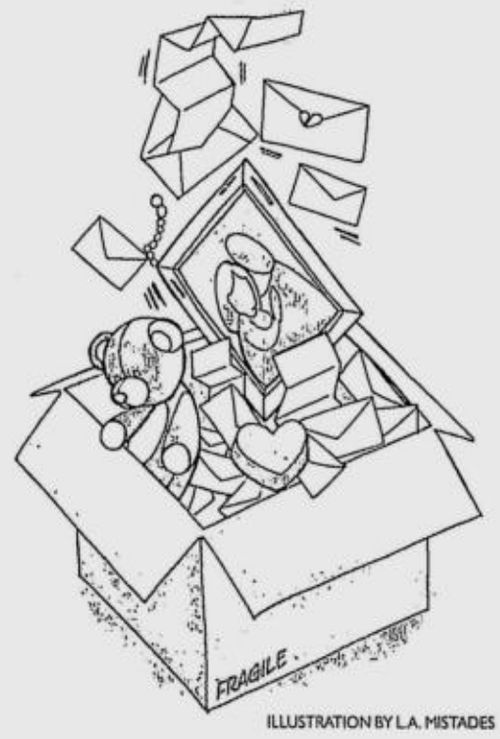


ILLUSTRATION BY L.A. MISTADES

I have a nagging feeling, though, that this was brought about by a series of seemingly insignificant details: those little things about you that irritated me, or one tiny aspect of my personality that somehow drove you up the wall. Perhaps I should have paid more attention; perhaps we should have sat down and talked about our relationship more often.

Right now, I'm not even sure whose fault this is, mostly because we have become so entangled with each other that I can no longer tell where you end and where I begin.

Do you think we can still get another shot someday?—I'm sure you would ask me that. But at the moment, my feelings for you are so complicated that I will not be able to give you the straight, honest answer you deserve, much less the hopeful, optimistic reply you need.

I wish I can tell you that we can get through this again, that we will work this out and chuckle over it in the future, when our grandchildren are gathered at our feet and we are telling them our against-all-odds, the-power-of-love-conquers-all story for the 43rd time.

I wish I can tell you that this is all for the best, that everything has a purpose, that everything happens for a reason. But right now, I cannot begin to understand why we were even together for so long—more than six years of our lives—if we weren't meant for each other in the first place. Sometimes, I catch myself wondering: Will it take me six more years to get over this, to get over you?

I can tell you this much, however. Life doesn't end when we do. And the more I realize this, the more it makes sense to keep on living, loving and laughing. So yes, we will get another shot someday—at genuine happiness, at the real thing—with or without each other.

Love, Clementine

TRACY Abad

JOEY Acero

What makes you a rock star?

ARE YOU LIVING THE ROCK 'N' ROLL life?

2bU! is letting you in on the "Rock Star: Supernova" craze! Unleash your inner rock star to win exclusive premium items from Star World's top-rating reality TV show. Keep sending us your most recent hi-resolution photos at a rockin' gig, and tell us in five sentences or less what makes your life rock. All entries must be e-mailed to rockstar_2bu@yahoo.com—just don't forget to include all the juicy details (your full name, date, place, gig/band).

Each week, 1-3 rocked out readers will win cool prizes from "Rock Star: Supernova" and have their winning entries published in upcoming 2bU! issues. So go ahead and rock our world, you know you want to!

"Rock Star: Supernova" airs live, exclusively on Star World every Wednesdays (8:30 a.m.) and Thursdays (8 a.m.), with primetime broadcasts at 8 p.m. on the same day.

Readers who rock!

Here are last week's winners:

Joey Acero

This is me during a mini-concert to celebrate my 26th birthday last May at my crib. I got so into the music that I ended up rocking and rolling on the floor!

Tracy Abad

My work makes my life rock! Being a DJ (tune into 99.5 RT Mondays to Thursdays at 12 noon and Sundays, 10 am!) entails knowing and appreciating different music genres. Rock music, especially local rock compositions, really wake me up for an early show. I also let out the rocker in me through other activities like being a courtside reporter for UAAP. Rock on!

Reg Ofiana

Our band, Kindness Drops, is a group of people who all became friends through Youth For Christ (YFC). It all started with praise and worship songs when we all decided to form a band. Since then, other than playing for YFC, we have also joined various contests and performed in numerous gigs.

What makes us rock? It's having the opportunity to bond with friends and do something that you are passionate about. We love music and it is great to see that people enjoy our performances.

Winners can claim their prizes by calling Cindy Corrales of Stratworks at 7513805-06.

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Taking over

When mom left the country after breaking up with dad, we were left to fend for ourselves. To make matters worse, we're illegitimate

By Tanya Ting
2bu! Contributor

MY FAMILY WASN'T what you'd call conventional. Papa coming to dinner was always a monumental event for my mom. You see, my dad had a real wife, and that's where he slept, and, well, technically lived. My mom always told me that his family would not accept her because she wasn't Chinese and that my dad had to marry that woman because the temple said their union would be beneficial to both their businesses. She told me that my dad loved his wife but he was in love with my mom and that was a big difference.

Yes, my mom was the other woman. The *kabit*. And we were the bastards, *the anak sa labas*.

I grew up with that reality: using a fake name for father's slot in application forms so his real family wouldn't find out, telling classmates that my dad worked overseas in Japan, pretending not to recognize my dad when I'd see him outside of the house, addressing him as sir (he was my mom's boss).

The only time I remember him coming to school as my father was when he brought my Hello Kitty lunch box to me when I had forgotten it at home. I was 6 then. To the public, he was always our benevolent, well-meaning, generous uncle.

In spite of this weird arrangement, my parents were happy. In the 23 years that they were together, they were always laughing, joking and affectionate with each other. My dad was treated like royalty. My mom catered to his every need. She would drop everything for him. She didn't even have friends, and she built her entire world around him.

Rocky

So, when things turned rocky three years ago, it was no surprise that my mom took it really hard. Ironically, my dad's infidelity really hit her hard and she was devastated. Her emotional turmoil manifested itself physically and she started getting sick—she developed symptoms that mimicked multiple sclerosis. She became clinically depressed.

I remember how she had started taking sleeping pills just so she wouldn't have to talk to my dad when he came over to see us, or how she'd go out of the house when he'd drop by (later, I learned from the helper that my mom would actually park her car a few blocks from the house and would wait for our helper to text that he had already left so she could return home).

TAKING/ D3

Aerosoles Flagship Store Opens at the SM Mall of Asia

Following the success of its shops at Rustan's department stores nationwide, Aerosoles opens its first-ever freestanding boutique at the 2nd floor, main mall of the SM Mall of Asia. July 29 marked the inauguration of the new shop completing Aerosoles' seventh exciting store.

The grand opening unveiled the latest trends from the label's Spring-Summer '06 collection. Aerosoles' long-standing friends and patrons participated in a fun and fabulous trunk show that gave the crowd a preview of gorgeous and comfortable footwear, all under the five inspirations completing the season's must-haves.

The first of the five revelations is World Play, a melting pot of ethnic references, lifting verve from cultural identities, down to the tribal prints associated with India, China, and the African Safari.

Rustic appeal and girly styles, where print patterns are key, put the spotlight on the Gypsy Queens, a collection that blurs the lines between "dressy" and "casual".

Turn heads in the "turn-of-the-century style" of the Royal Affair. This line of footwear sets off light and airy feminine dressing, frills, pleats, bows and bussels evoking antiquity and the charisma of naive innocence.

The Good Life collection is of heavy nautical inspiration. Refined American classics emerge in the series bathed in shades of grass, mulberry, lemon, Valencia, aqua and white.

The final flaunt-worthy variation is called Odyssey. Aptly of ancient Greek inspiration, it boasts of über-stylish shapes in sonata, metallic, and pearlized leather, and kid suede.

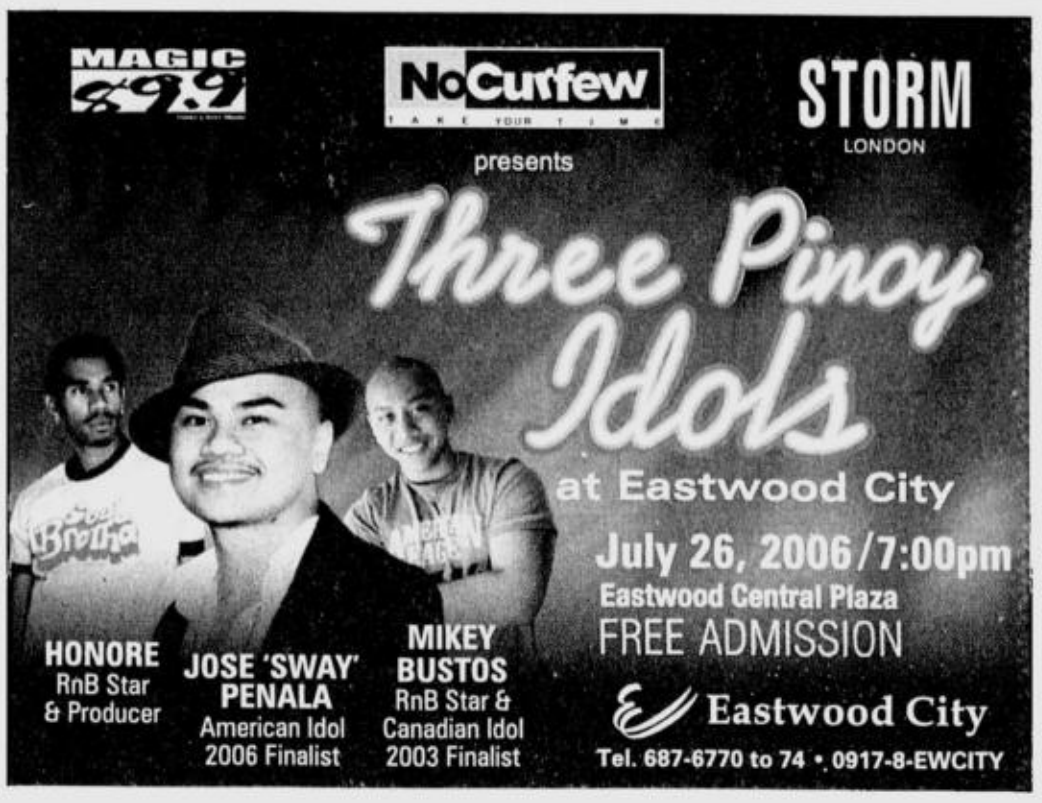
Aerosoles new Spring-Summer assortment celebrates nature and energy at its purest, with natural leather tones as coffee and beige.

The collection leaves nothing to chance, keeping hard focus on the active and spontaneous woman's lifestyle. The trip to the beach in 'First Pace'; shopping in the malls of Manila in 'Feather Tread' sandals, which allow a woman to walk effortlessly for long periods in the comfort of a 'wedge heel', until the triumphant night out in the glamorous 'Basket Weave'.

Eclectic, imaginative and multifaceted, is how the new 'Aerosoles' Spring-Summer collection is presented.

Aerosoles is available at Rustan's department stores in Makati, Shangri-La Plaza, Alabang Town Center, Gateway Cubao, Robinson's Place and Cebu, as well as the SM Mall of Asia.

ADVT



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July 29, 2006

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2-year	10.50%	P9,984
3-year	11.00%	P10,322
5-year	11.25%	P10,493
10-year	**11.50%**	**P10,665**

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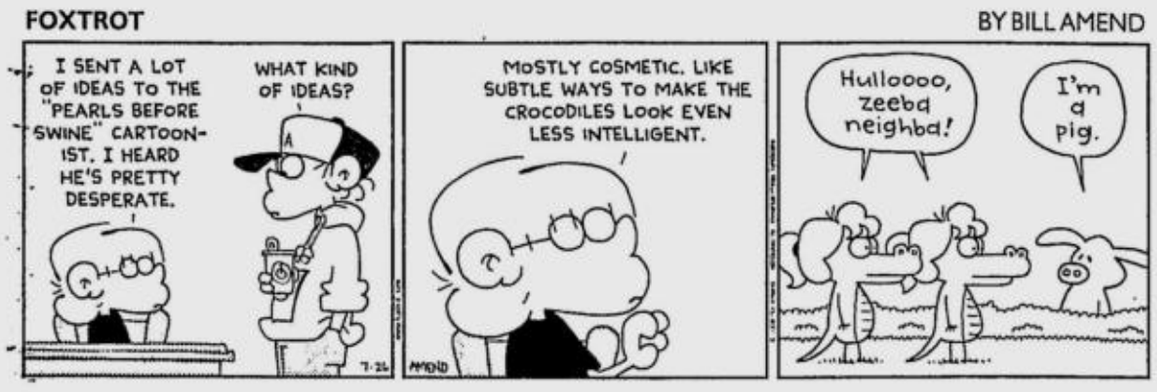
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND

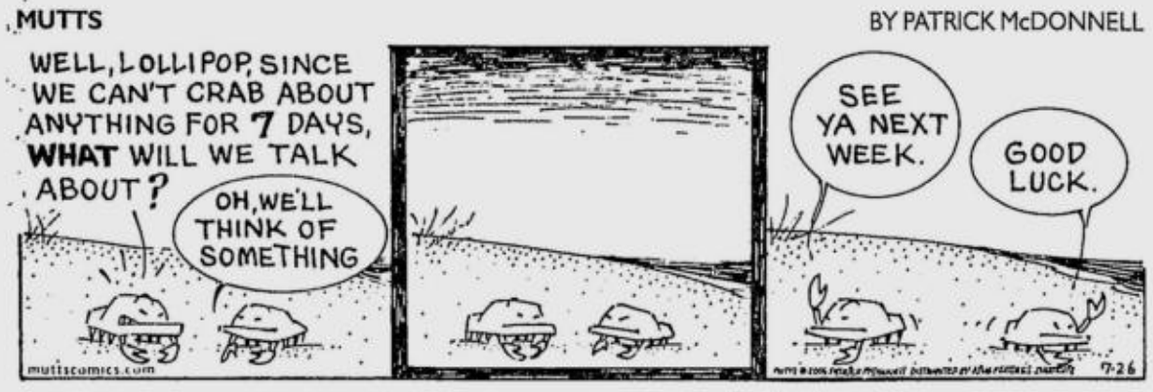


A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL



LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA

MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

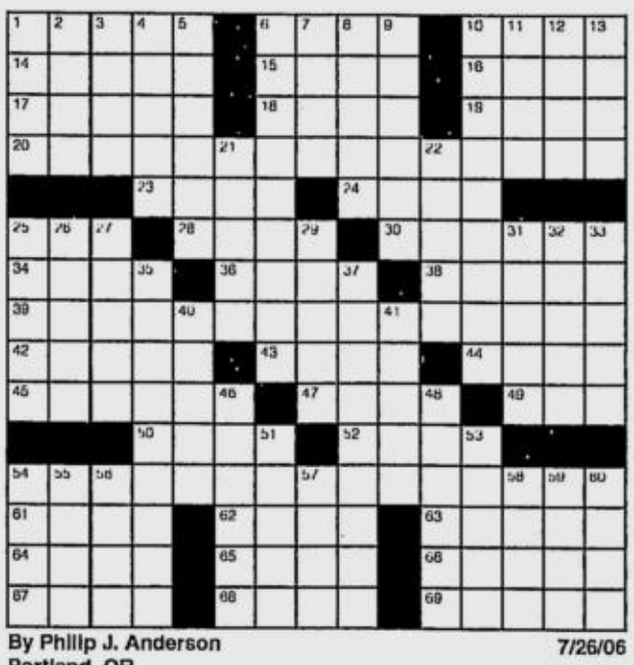
TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Greek market
6 Austen heroine
10 Harvest
14 Operates with a beam
15 Bound upward
16 Exxon, once
17 Fire residue
18 __ fide (good faith)
19 Podium
20 Vacation of a felon?
23 Fricassee
24 Front of a calf
25 Service charge
28 For certain
30 Provides with funding
34 Razor choice
36 Generic soft drink
38 Abraham's wife
39 Vacation of a thespian?
42 Steppes settler
43 Japanese soup
44 Scholarly book
45 Serenaded the sheets
47 Fourth piggy's fare
49 Letters in old atlases
50 Brother of Abel
52 Metal containers
54 Vacation of an optometrist?
61 Singer Amos
62 __ fide (bad faith)
63 Narrow ridge
64 Cuckoo kin
65 Came down
66 "The Screens" dramatist
67 Declaim wildly
68 __-majesty
69 Fancy pitchers

DOWN
1 Woeful word
2 Deep cut
3 Workplace safety grp.
4 Exudes a strong odor
5 Good points
6 Ample space
7 Siamese statement
8 Horace and Thomas
9 Geronimo's tribe
10 Superfluous
11 Actor Morales
12 Closeout caveat
13 Sit for pic
21 Tennis tie?
22 Laundry cycle
25 Sgt. Friday's quest
26 Actor Hawke
27 Muse of poetry
29 Pixyish
31 Lunch box cookies
32 Reheats
33 More reticent
35 Anti-government activist
37 Business partner
40 Alexander's adjective
41 Talk-show host O'Brien
46 Gloomy
48 Mesh, like gears
51 Zora __ Hurston
53 Scatter
54 Headliner
55 New Rochelle college
56 __ and bear it
57 "Boola Boola" singers
58 Coty or Descartes
59 Roman way
60 Favorites



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

7/26/06

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

S	E	E	P	■	B	L	A	S	E	■	S	W	A	G
A	A	R	E	■	M	O	N	E	T	■	O	H	I	O
W	R	I	S	T	W	A	T	C	H	■	D	I	D	O
S	N	E	E	R	■	M	I	T	I	G	A	T	E	D
■	■	■	T	A	D	■	■	S	C	A	P	E	■	■
H	A	W	A	I	I	A	N	■	S	L	O	W	E	R
U	G	H	■	L	A	G	O	S	■	S	P	A	R	E
L	I	O	N	■	L	A	T	H	S	■	S	T	A	G
A	L	L	A	H	■	R	E	A	M	S	■	E	S	A
S	E	E	M	E	D	■	S	Q	U	I	R	R	E	L
■	■	■	W	E	A	R	S	■	■	■	G	N	U	■
I	N	H	A	L	A	N	T	S	■	E	S	S	A	Y
L	O	E	B	■	W	O	R	T	H	W	H	I	L	E
S	I	A	L	■	L	O	U	I	E	■	E	R	M	A
A	R	T	E	■	S	T	E	R	N	■	D	E	A	R

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7/26/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: People definitely notice you. You're out there with your colors flying. Your leadership skills are effective because you understand what makes people tick. You study and prepare yourself for things; nevertheless, you'll also take a gamble. You're self-confident; your views are your own. A major change might take place this year (perhaps similar to 1997).

Birthdate of: Sandra Bullock, actress; Kate Beckinsale, actress; Mick Jagger, musician.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a marvelous day to entertain at home and enjoy the company of family and friends. Any attempt to redecorate or renovate will please you and perhaps bring you future profits or revenue

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You can earn money today through talking, writing and communicating with others. You've got the gift of gab. This is also a good day to smooth over troubled waters with relatives and siblings.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a good day to shop for beautiful things for yourself or others. If you do, then shop in the morning or the afternoon. Just hang loose in the evening.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Venus is in your sign, making a lovely aspect to lucky Jupiter today. It doesn't get much better than this. Enjoy the company of others. Enjoy being you!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Solitude in beautiful surroundings will delight you today. You feel peacefully content and happy with your world. You'll get pleasure from helping others now.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Enjoy schmoozing with friends today. All social occasions will please you. Accept all invitations. A platonic friend could become a romantic interest!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Discussions with bosses, VIPs, parents and teachers go very well today. People are impressed with you. It appears that you've done your homework. (They think you know what you're doing!)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Opportunities to travel or to explore further education could come your way today. If this happens, act on your good fortune. A pleasant adventure awaits you!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a fortunate day for you. Gifts, goodies and favors from others will come your way. You also feel very sexy and flirtatious today! (Either way, you're enjoying life.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Partners and close friends are warm and generous to you today. Perhaps this is a response to your own good feelings toward others. (Tell someone how much you care.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Coworkers are extremely supportive today. Push for whatever you want at work. Things will easily go your way. Others want to do favors for you.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Love affairs, romance, vacations, sports and playful activities with children are warm, wonderful experiences today. God's in her heaven, and all's right with the world.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

9		3			8			1
	7			4			9	
					3			2
4		2						
	1						6	
						7		8
8			6					
	2			7			4	
1			9			8		3

Difficulty Level ★★★ 7/26

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	5	1	3	6	7	2	4	8
6	4	7	1	2	8	5	3	9
2	8	3	4	9	5	1	6	7
7	2	5	6	1	4	9	8	3
3	1	6	8	5	9	7	2	4
8	9	4	2	7	3	6	5	1
4	7	2	9	3	6	8	1	5
5	6	8	7	4	1	3	9	2
1	3	9	5	8	2	4	7	6

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Difficulty Level ★★

What it's like to undergo laser eye surgery

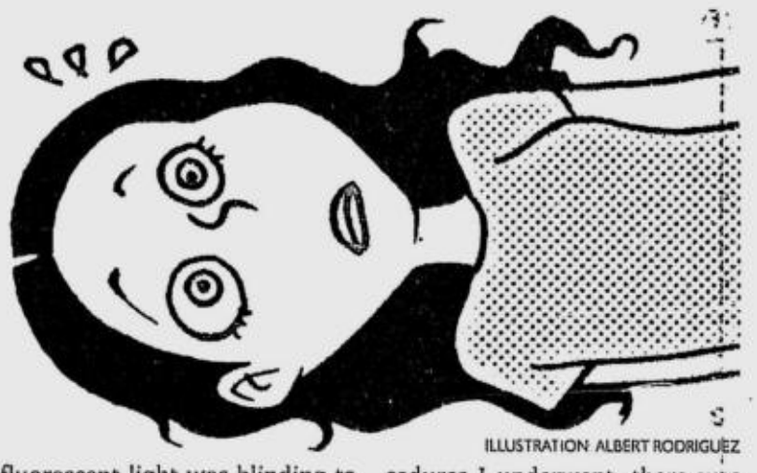

ILLUSTRATION ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

By Leslie Ann Tan
2bu! Correspondent

I don't want to go through it again, but I am glad I did

WHAT WOULD THE gift of sight be worth? In my case, I was able to regain my sight for P60,000. No, I wasn't born blind, but ever since I was young, I had poor vision and clarity. At 9 years old, I had my first eye checkup and immediately the optometrist (or was it the ophthalmologist?) prescribed a pair of glasses with a grade of 300. I apparently suffered from nearsightedness.

Over the years, my vision worsened. Even after memorizing the panel of letters that I know the optometrist would ask me to read (in short, I tried to cheat), my grade increased to 450, compounded by astigmatism of some 75 per eye.

Those who have less-than-perfect vision can probably sympathize with me. When I was wearing glasses, I always felt uncomfortable, not to mention unattractive!

Glasses are heavy, obtrusive and dirt easily finds its way through the cracks of the frame. If you happen to forget them while in school, well, good luck trying to have a normal day. Chances are, you'd walk much slower, grope around to make sure you don't bump into anything, and squint while trying to read the lessons off the blackboard. Lastly, glasses are also the hardest thing to find!

When I was old enough to switch to soft contact lenses, I thought my troubles would be over. Not so fast. It took me forever to put them on, they were always getting folded or lost inside my eye sockets (scary!). These foreign objects also irritated my eyes, causing my eyes to tear a lot and turn red, often in the most important of days.

In 2003, I finally got the courage to explore Lasik. The new technology had been in the Philippines for more than five years so I took a bit of comfort in that.

Lasik stands for "laser-assisted in-situ keratomileusis," used for correcting nearsightedness/myopia and astigmatism. The procedure is often described as "flap and zap." Lasik makes a small flap in the cornea and removes some of the exposed tissue, careful not to damage nearby tissues.

The process starts weeks before, when you have to go through a comprehensive checkup. Using different kinds of machines, the attendants ascertain your eligibility.

I understand that not all are suited for Lasik such as minors, pregnant women, those with a thin cornea or whose grade are still unstable.

Luckily for me, I passed the screening. I booked myself for a 9 a.m. appointment in July 2003 at American Eye Center in Shangri-La Mall.

On D-Day, I tried to keep my mind off the surgery, chatting with my sister and dad, who both gamely accompanied me. The attendants put drops in my eyes, dilating it slowly.

After about an hour of prepping my eyes, I was brought to a dark room. By this time, they had covered my eyes and I vaguely recognized other people seated with me in the same room. It was adjacent to the operating room, and we were all queued up for the same operation.

When it was my turn, I was made to lie down and there were lights on top of me. The instructions were very simple—I just had to focus on a blinking red light hanging on top of me. Throughout the flap-and-zap operation, I could see everything but I could feel nothing. They must have anesthetized my eyes.

I felt it lasted forever, but I was told it lasted under 10 minutes per eye. When I finished, normal fluorescent light was blinding to my then sensitive eyes. They said that was normal.

So I went home blindfolded, ate (my sister spoon-fed me) and slept. I slept through the pain.

When I woke up after four hours, the pain was barely there. I was amazed at my vision; everything was brighter and clearer than even when I had glasses/lenses on.

It was truly a remarkable moment. You could say I saw things on a different light since that fateful day.

When I think back on my Lasik experience, I don't think I'll ever undergo the same kind of surgery. I shudder at the thought.

When I break it down though, into the individual steps and procedures I underwent, there was nothing remotely scary, except for the 20 minutes when I had to lie down on the operating table.

But while I will never do it again, I am glad I did it. Even though the price tag hurts, it is nothing compared to the gift of sight.

Tips

- Try to do it first thing in the morning, so you don't lose your nerves.
- Have a family member or best buddy with you to lead you out of the clinic into the car and into the safety of your home. You can't do this alone, since you will not be able to drive yourself home!
- Sleep through the pain.

Taking over

From page D1

This scenario lasted for almost a year before she reached her breaking point. She thought of leaving for the US to seek treatment for her illness, and perhaps to put an ocean between her and my father. She said that she could not have left if she felt that I wasn't capable of taking care of my brothers. I assured her that I could, and that pushed her to leave.

She didn't even have time to prepare all the necessary documents her leaving would require. All she left me were a paper bag stuffed with papers I might need (with little Post-Its describing what they were), a stack of authorization letters, an ID and her ATM card.

She left in such a hurry, she didn't even see me graduate from college. Though I brushed it off, I felt a bit sad that neither of my parents attended my graduation. Anyway, it wasn't as if she wanted to miss it intentionally.

The first few months of phone calls from my mom were really depressing. Every call was punctuated with sobbing from her end because when she isolated herself from my father, she was, unwittingly, isolating herself from her children and her family. After all, loneliness and heartbreak in an unfamiliar place are a terrible combination.

When she left, all her responsibilities fell on my shoulders. I was in charge of running the household and taking care of my brothers.

Running the household involved budgeting the money my dad would give us for the month. I needed to allot money for the rent, groceries, utility bills, the helpers' salaries, gas, emergency funds and savings.

Upon handling the finances for the first time, I discovered that my mom left behind debts she had kept hidden from my dad. She was never adept at handling money and this was evident when I realized that we didn't have any savings. Zero.

I felt very frightened, and I guess, a little angry with my mom for her irresponsibility.

It has been a tough climb, but our finances are looking better now. I manage to save a little each month and I've set up a bank account that yields good interest rates. I also have plans to save more, just in case.

The thing about running a household is that there are unexpected occurrences that I always had to be prepared for. Like one of the helpers getting hit by a car and requiring medical attention. All of a sudden, I became responsible for so many things. Everybody turned to me for decisions regarding the house and it was so scary. It still is.

My brothers

Another role I've had to fill is that of "mommy" to my brothers. Although they were teenagers when my mom left, and our age gap isn't that big—eight years essentially—they still need guidance.

It's harder trying to be a figure of authority because I'm just their *ate*. I must admit, I'm a bit lax with the rules. Actually, there are no real rules; I just try to keep the communication lines as open as possible. If they did something I think is wrong, I talk to them as calmly as I can (which can be really hard!). I don't mind them staying out late, as long as I know where they're going and what time they'll be home. I put a premium on honesty and trust.

Parenting is tricky business, trickier still if you don't know jack about it.

I felt this need to make sure that the transition of being "orphaned" was as smooth as possible, as if things were still the same, though they were far from that. I made sure that their birthdays were still special, the way my mom used to do it.

We sleep in the same room so that we can talk often (and save on electricity!) and find out what's going on with each other.

Attending parent-teacher conferences, signing report cards, buying uniforms, helping with the homework—it's tough. I'm just thankful that my brothers aren't the rebel types; we actually have a tight, strong relationship, peppered by routine shouting matches over uncapped toothpaste tubes and unflushed toilets.

Worried 'parent'

On a deeper level, I constantly worry whether I'm raising them properly. Will they grow up to be good, decent, honest men? Are they respectful of others? Do they open doors for girls? Do they have good table manners? I feel that the person they will become will be a reflection of how I've influenced them and that is such a big responsibility. I mean, how do I teach them stuff I'm only just learning myself?

It's been three years, four months and 17 days since my mom left. We haven't seen her since. Not even a recent photograph, though we text and talk over the phone. We make plans to visit her someday, but only when she's settled and stable there.

People who know about my situation always ask, "are you mad at your mom for leaving?" I've asked myself this same question. And the answer is always the same. No, I'm not. Honestly. Yes, her leaving has given me a certain loss of freedom for myself. I can't study abroad like I'd originally wanted since no one would be around to take care of my brothers, but I think that with every lost opportunity, there is another one waiting to take its place. It might not have provided the same benefits to me, but there were benefits to be had just the same.

People also say *"kawawa naman kayo."* You know what? We aren't *kawawa* at all. Whenever I feel a bout of self-pity coming on, I always think of my mom, swimming alone in a sea of strangers. I have no right to feel sorry for myself. The responsibilities I have right now are part of being in this family. She took care of us for 23 years, she gave up the better part of her life, placing our needs above hers all the time. If she needs to leave to be better, then it is her right to do so. It's the least I can do for my mom, a woman who gifted me with life and taught me many valuable things.

The author's real name was not used in order to protect her family's privacy.

Handicapped for six months

By Tiffany Limsico
2bU! Contributor

WHILE LYING ON A hospital bed with a broken arm and leg from a car accident in Kuala Lumpur, I decided it would be the perfect time for a pity party, with only me in attendance. I would have invited some friends over, but I needed the time to grieve alone and ask God, "Why Me?" again and again.

When you come home a month after surviving a could-have-been fatal trauma such as mine, you can be sure friends will come in droves to visit. I always tried injecting small doses of self-deprecating humor in the story I told them, an effort to remind them that I was okay, even if I had metal implants and visible scars, even if I was in a wheelchair while waiting for my bones to heal.

You feel loved, admired and lucky to be alive for maybe, two weeks tops.

After that, reality arrives like an anvil falling on your head. Nothing could diminish the fact of my helplessness, not the free vacation that afforded me day after day of movie marathons and novels finished in one sitting, not even the excuse to sleep whenever I wanted. Because my arm and leg were both broken on the same side, I had to depend on other people to help me with the most quotidian of tasks, like going to the bathroom, going down for dinner, going to bed, basically going anywhere at all.

Stretches of afternoons alone at home were often the most difficult. Everyone else's lives went on and mine had been temporarily stalled. Friends told me this was the perfect chance to start writing again, but even the most lucid of my memories became clouded by anesthesia and every effort became obscured by my sheer unwillingness to accept the condition I was in.

> When the accident happened last November, I was given a second loan on life. I have decided to spend what is left of my life paying it back

My time on the Internet was wasted on Googling pictures of crutches for the day when I would finally be allowed to use them, if not reading up on the sob stories of other handicapped patients.

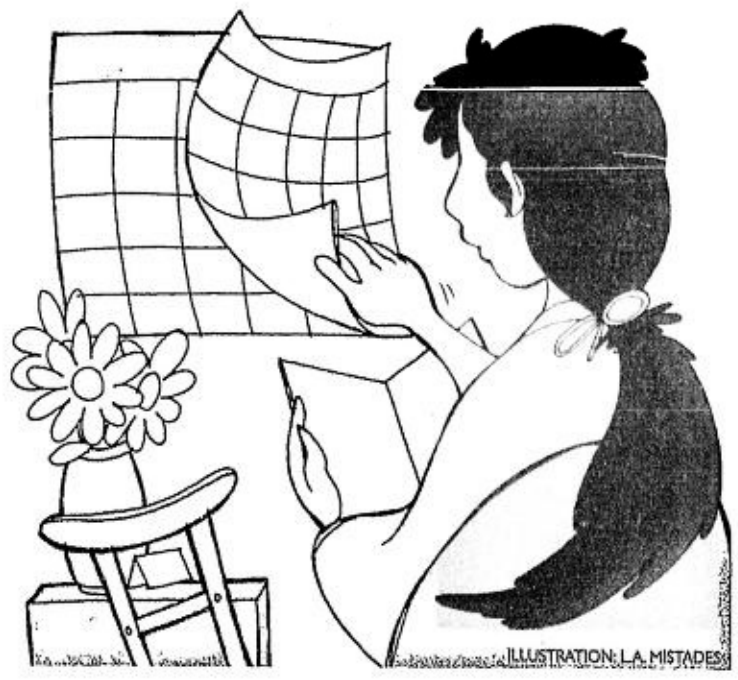
ILLUSTRATION: L.A. MISTADES

Three kinds of people

I came to see how people were divided into three kinds based on their reactions to the handicapped. The first kind turned a blind eye to the handicapped, spoke of them in hushed tones, whispered discreetly, if at all—as if by not looking they could somehow make the reality of them disappear.

The second kind, as a counterpoint, seemed to think it was all right to stare at me as if I was part of a freak show. And I don't mean sidelong glances here. Some people would really stare at me and would even crane their necks and look back almost intrusively as I was wheeled away.

A college blockmate later admitted he deliberately avoided me while I was handicapped since he didn't know if he should show me pity or nonchalance. Then he reassured me, "Don't worry. I may not be good at dealing with you while you're going through a trauma, but I'm definitely going to be there in the aftermath."

"Everyone is there during the aftermath. I needed my friends the most while I was handicapped," I told him, my heart sinking.

The true test was when people I knew were there with me through the six months of tediously waiting to get better, of countless x-ray results and one doctor after the other, of not-so-good days and worse ones.

I am most glad for the third kind, those outliers, which I am glad to have found not just in family and friends but random strangers, hospital staff, and acquaintances-turned-genuine friends.

These were people gifted with the extraordinary ability to be sensitive and accepting of my condition. During my convalescence, they treated me as a person, someone they knew was much more than her disability. These people made my disability easier to fathom. They pulled me out of my black hole and reminded me there was life outside of being handicapped, in spite of being handicapped. For a while, I forgot I was wheelchair-bound and felt like myself again.

Opportunities gained

In times like this, it's too easy to lapse into the habit of measuring your life in opportunities lost: rock concerts, one holiday party after the next, any place where there's a flight of stairs and no elevator. Recovery came to me after six months. But some people courageously battle the helplessness and hopelessness of being disabled their whole lives.

Thus, I learned to think in terms of opportunities gained. Even though I could not walk, it became clear to me, as poet Stephen Dunn wrote: "How obscene it is for some of us to complain."

Nancy Mairs, in her essay "On Being A Cripple," writes about people's belief that "cripples must bear their lot meekly and cheerfully. A grumpy cripple isn't playing by the rules."

I became optimistic because pessimism was too tiring, and I laughed often and loudly because when you are handicapped, you learn to look harder for happiness and thus find it in places where other people don't care to look.

It saddens me that I live in a city where people think it's okay to pretend not to see someone waiting in a wheelchair and then place themselves ahead in line for the elevator. But I am grateful for those friends who glared back at strangers staring at me, who patiently pushed me inside bookstores while I read, who helped carry my wheelchair when there wasn't a ramp in sight.

I am grateful for my family. They've seen my happiest and crankiest selves, and these days they remind me to always look before I cross the street.

But I am most grateful for being able to walk again. I hate how most handicapped stories end with how the protagonist finds inner strength and realizes that life is worth living after all. I know that I will continue to meet disappointments and misfortunes that will make this accident seem major or minor in comparison. Accidents are not the turning points in life they are often portrayed to be. Rather, they are the vantage points from which life proceeds.

It is my hope that I make less severe judgments these days, and only because I have been given a broader range of experience and emotion to draw empathy from.

I can hear my friends scoffing at me, reminding me I haven't changed one bit. But I hope to prove them wrong one small, tentative step at a time, much like how I came to walk again.

When the accident happened last November, I was given a second loan on life. I have decided to spend what is left of my life paying it back.

Whenever you flush, the air inside the toilet shoots up by several feet.

This means that odor-causing bacteria are floating above, and around you, long after you use the toilet.

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